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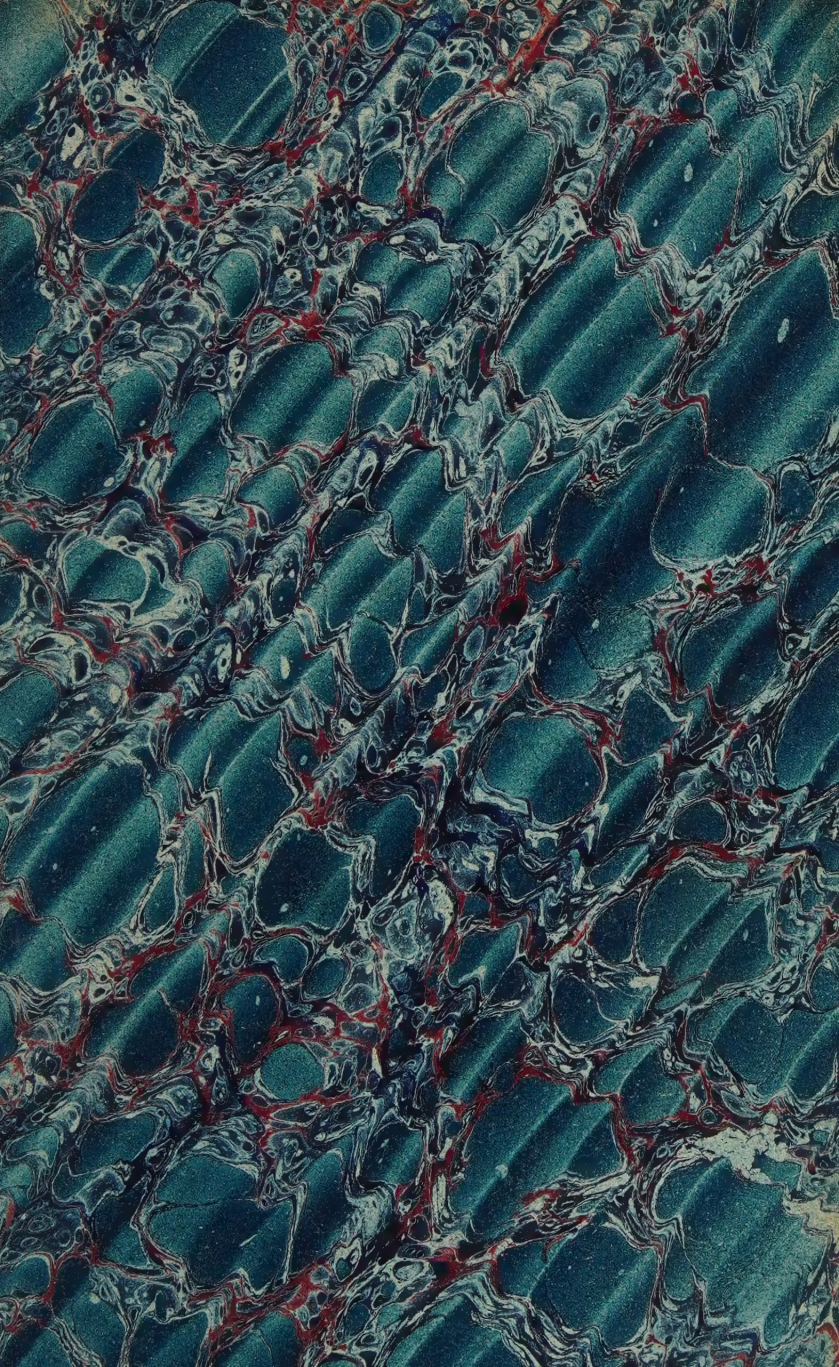

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TRAVELS

IN

PALESTINE AND SYRIA.

BY

GEORGE ROBINSON, Esq.

ILLUSTRATED WITH MAPS AND PLANS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

SYRIA.

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PALESTINE AND SYRIA.

SYRIA.

CHAPTER I.

Town of Beirout—Its Antiquities—Its Trade and Commerce—Eastern and European Habits compared—Excursion with Captain Chesney on the Mountain—District inhabited by the Druses—Brumana—Deir-el-Khalât—Religion of the Druses—Convent of Mar Hannah—Shouair—Zibdy—Solima—Ras-el-Mitayne—The Druses—Their Hospitality—Arrival at Deir-el-Kammar—Sudden Indisposition of the Author.

Beirout, Sept. 20, 1830.—The modern town of Beirout, the representative of the ancient Berytus, is situated at the western extremity of a triangular point of land, projecting into the sea about four miles beyond the line of coast. It stands on a gentle rising ground close to the sea shore, and is

about three miles in circumference. The walls by which it is encompassed on the land side are of recent date, and of no great strength, being of a soft sand-stone, and flanked with square towers at intervals. The streets, generally speaking, are narrow and irregular; and in some quarters, where not enlivened by shops, particularly gloomy. A raised pathway for foot passengers lines their sides, and a channel of running water flows down the centre part, thus contributing essentially to the cleanliness of the town, and giving to it a cool and refreshing appearance, particularly in the hot summer months. There are no public buildings of any merit, and the few that once distinguished it are now in ruins. The bazaars are large, particularly that in which silk is sold, and well attended by the inhabitants of the neighbouring mountains. The chief part of the population is Maronite; besides which there are Greeks (i. e. members of the Greek church), Jews, and some few Turks.

I met here with what I little expected to find in these parts, an excellent inn, kept by a Maltese, named Guiseppe, and it is, I understand, the only establishment entitled to that name throughout the whole of Syria. Although by this time I was pretty well inured to the privations incident to the vagabond life I had voluntarily imposed upon myself; upon returning for a while to my former habits, I could not refrain from making comparisons between the advantages that some of the latter

presented over my adopted ones; such as, for instance, a comfortable sitting-room with divans, and the hard ground at the foot of a tree—a soft bed with clean sheets, and my little carpet rug with my saddle-bags for a pillow—a dinner of several courses, spread over a damask table cloth, and my simple bowl of pilaf, with a wooden spoon to eat it with.

The result of these comparisons, and others, it is superfluous to mention, was necessarily for the moment in favour of what is called "civilized life." However, in this delightful climate, every day presenting to view some new object of the highest interest, the mind is otherwise occupied than in attending to these matters. Articles which, at starting, the European traveller, had deemed absolutely necessary, to wit—beds, tents, canteens, etc., are quickly laid aside, from the trouble they occasion in their transport from one place to another, and their absence soon forgotten. Here I rejoined my fellow-travellers, MM. de Breuvery and de Cadalvene, who had preceded me by sea from Acre. The latter is still in a delicate state of health, and intends embracing the first opportunity of returning to Europe.

Soon after my arrival I waited upon Mr. Abbott, the British Consul, whose official residence is at Beirout, though his jurisdiction extends over the whole of Syria. All the other European powers

have their respective consuls here likewise; this being a place of some trade, and the port to Damascus, from which it is distant ninety miles. The exports are wine, galls, madders, gums, silk, raw and wrought, the produce of the mountains, and oil made from the olives of the plain, lying between this and Sidon, which is considered the best in Syria. The articles imported are muslins, cotton yarns, white and printed goods, tin, hardware, cloths, and West India produce. The trade, though as yet limited, is, I understand, on the increase. Already there are about a dozen European establishments in the place. Travellers, on arriving at Beirout, would do well to see about making their money arrangements for the period they are to be absent in the interior, this being one of the few places in Syria, where a bill of exchange can be discounted, without great loss and much trouble. Payments are made, as in other parts of the Turkish dominions, in piastres and Spanish dollars, fifteen of the former being equal to one of the latter. The piastre is divided into forty paras.*

Sept. 26.—There is little to detain the antiquarian traveller in Beirout, for though it occupies

* At the period of the author's visit the pound sterling was worth seventy piastres. Owing to the successive debasement of the Turkish coin, at the royal mint, it has since risen, I understand, to one hundred.

the same site as the ancient Berytus,* there are few traces of early times to be met with. The entrance to the port, which is formed by a small bay, is defended by two square towers. One of these stands upon an insulated rock, and is a picturesque ruin. The other is joined to the shore by a causeway on unequally-sized archways, through which the sea flows. The facing of this pier is almost entirely composed of ancient fragments of columns. Along the shore, to the westward, but now encroached upon by the sea, are the remains of Mosaic floors, of tolerably good workmanship. In several parts of the town are cisterns and wells sunk in the rock, and other subterraneous recesses; and to the north of it there are some faint traces of the theatre erected here by Herod Agrippa.

Beirout has evidently suffered much from earthquakes, but still more so from the hostile visitations to which it has been repeatedly exposed. It was taken from the Saracens by Baldwin the First, King of Jerusalem, in 1111, and retaken 1187. Ten years afterwards, the Christians recaptured it, and it was frequently ravaged during the crusades. Subsequently it fell into the hands of the Druses, from whom it was taken by the Turks, who still retain possession of it. In its more peaceful days it was a place of study, particularly of the civil law, and especially about the time

* See Appendix, No. 1.

that Christianity began to be publicly established. By Justinian it was called the "mother and nurse of the law." It is still a very agreeable place; and owing to its beautiful situation, the salubrity of the climate, and the rich vegetation that surrounds it, strangers are often tempted to prolong their stay here long after the period originally fixed for quitting it.

For my own part, being invited to spend a few days with Mr. Abbott, the consul, at his country retreat in the mountains, I deferred becoming more intimately acquainted with its resources, till my return from thence. Accordingly this afternoon, having hired mules, we set off for Brumana, the name of the village where Mr. Abbott resides during the summer months. Captain Chesney,* of the engineers, with whom I had recently become acquainted, was of the party. A vast number of substantially-built cottages, standing insulated from one another, in a grove of mulberry-trees, and each with a little garden attached to it, meet the eye on going out by the southern gate of the city, and form a very agreeable suburb.

The principal occupation of the owners of these houses, many of whom have other establishments in the town, is the growth of silk. In an hour and a half we reached the foot of the chain of mountains running parallel with the coast, and which here fall very abruptly down to the

* See Appendix, No. 2.

plain. As I said before, we were mounted on mules, the usual and best mode of travelling in this hilly district. They are guided by a bit of rope fastened to a chain round the muzzle; but this is no check upon them when the mule and his rider are not of the same mind, and it often occurs that the former is provokingly obstinate in opposing the wishes of the latter. This unpleasantness is compensated for by a consciousness of security in descending a precipitous route; for, if allowed to pick their way, an accident seldom occurs, which is not the case with horses, particularly those let out for hire. In two hours more we reached Brumana, a small village situated on one of the high mountains which border this part of the coast, and in the centre of the district inhabited almost exclusively by the people called Druses. Here Mr. Abbott usually resides during the summer months with his family, enjoying the cool breezes that come up from the sea, and a delicious view extending over the plain of Beirout, and the line of coast north and south. When his presence is required in the town, he is telegraphed from the terrace that surmounts the consular house. Amongst the guests under Mr. Abbott's hospitable roof, we found our friend Dr. Holt Yates, who had parted from us at Cairo. He was laid up with intermittent fever, and was come here for the benefit of the fine air, the only

remedy known when medicine (bark) ceases to have its effect.

Sept. 25.—Our first excursion on foot on the mountain district was to Deir-el-Khalât, the "Convent of the Castle," situated about an hour and twenty minutes from Brumâna, in a southerly direction. From the name, the position it occupies, and the existing remains, one may safely presume that this was formerly a strong military pass. In the centre of a large space, covered with ruins, is a Maronite convent, inhabited by two solitary monks. Before the entrance to the church stand four rude columns, sixteen feet in circumference. They formed part of a temple, of which the cella remains. The stones which were employed in its construction are calcareous, and of immense dimensions. The whole was probably Phœnician.

Sept. 26.—This morning we visited the Emir of Brumâna. His palace (serai), for so it is called, is a large well-built mansion, agreeably situated on the edge of the valley, which runs to the east of the village. The prince's family, and that of the consul, appear to be living upon terms of great intimacy. I was surprised at the unceremonious manner in which we were received; and though there was a total absence of the etiquette observed in Turkish houses, on the other hand, there was no want of cordiality and good feeling

towards us. The dress of the female Druse resembles that of the Turkish women elsewhere, excepting that they wear that singular ornament of the head, called the *tantour*,* which is a conical tube, about eighteen inches long, of silver, or copper silvered slightly over, according to the wealth of the wearer, and ornamented with a variety of patterns. It is fixed upon a cushion fastened to the top of the forehead, and inclines slightly forward, like the horn of the fabled unicorn. Over this a piece of white muslin is thrown, which falls down to the hips, and serves to envelope their faces at pleasure when they go abroad. This extraordinary *coiffure*, if not graceful, is picturesque, although it must be confessed, it impresses the beholder with an appearance of restraint to the wearer. In some parts of the mountain it is worn projecting from the side of the head; but this schismatical fashion is even still more unbecoming than the orthodox one. One of the Emir's daughters, a very pretty girl of fifteen, was about to be married, and yet she appeared dejected. Upon inquiring the cause, I was told that the person to whom she was betrothed had signified his intention that she should not wear the horn!

Just outside of Brumâna is a small detached stone building, surmounted by a cupola, with an aged tree growing near it. Seeing the door left

* See Appendix. No. 3.

open, I was in the act of approaching it, when I was warned off by some by-standers. On relating the circumstance to Mr. Abbott, he told me that it was a Druse oratory* that I had wished to enter, and that I had done well to obey the injunction, for they are extremely jealous on this point, even more so than Mussulmen, their religious rites and ceremonies being enveloped in the greatest mystery. All that is known concerning their religion (and this is only founded on conjecture) is that they are a remnant of some Mahommedan heresy, set on foot by some daring impostor for political purposes. It is pretty evident that it did not originate in fanaticism, for they are an extremely tolerant sort of people, particularly in matters of religion. Indeed their creed, such as it is represented to us, pourtrays more of folly than of vice.† They seem to have the same relation to Mahommedanism, as the Samaritans had to the Jews; and, what is not less remarkable, they are charged precisely with the same species of idolatry as the Jews attributed to the Samaritans, namely, the worship of the calf.

But this imputation rests entirely upon hearsay, which, being repeated by successive travellers, is of course set down as a fact. The Druses themselves deny it. What is more certain, is, that they are divided into two grand classes—

* These chapels are called *Khaloue*, i. e., an isolated place.

† See Appendix, No. 4.

that of the "Akoul" (sing. Aakel), *Intelligent;* and that of the "Djahels," or *Ignorant*. The Akoul, in number about ten thousand, form the Sacred order; and are distinguishable by their white turbans, the emblem of purity, and the peculiarity of the folds in which they wear it. The Akoul are not permitted to smoke tobacco; they never swear, and are very reserved in their manners and conversation. Nevertheless, they are allowed to marry. The chief of the Order resides in a village called El-Mutna. The title and privileges are not necessarily handed down from father to son. When arrived at a certain age, every individual Druse who wishes it, and whose conduct has not been stained by any flagrant vice, may, after passing through some initiatory ceremonies, enter the order. The Djahels, or uninitiated, who form by far the most numerous class, perform no religious rite whatever, unless when circumstances oblige them to assume the appearance of Mussulmen. On these occasions, they enter the mosques, and recite their prayers with the Turks. Schools are pretty frequent among the Druses. The Akoul are generally the masters, and are paid by their pupils. They teach reading and writing. The book generally used as an exercise for the children is the Koran. In some villages, where the only schools are those of the Christians, the

Druses send their children thither, where they are taught to read the Psalms of David.

Sept. 30.—Our conversation during the preceding days having turned principally upon the Druses, their habits, mode of life, and religion, I left Brumâna this morning in company with Captain Chesney, to make an excursion upon the neighbouring mountains, inhabited more particularly by this singular people, with whom we had just become acquainted. These mountains, which are a lower range of Libanus, are every where covered with a sufficient portion of soil to admit of cultivation, even to their summits. They are not less remarkable for their dense population which inhabits them; houses and hamlets meet the eye in every direction. The number of the Druses is estimated at seventy thousand. Of these one-third are capable of bearing arms. It is not known at what period they first settled in these parts: *min kadim*, "a long while ago," is the general answer given to all inquiries on the subject. The Druses are not confined to Mount Lebanon; they are likewise spread over the Haouran, a country lying to the south-east of Damascus.

The first village we came to, in proceeding northward, was Boukfaya, seated on a rising ground, overlooking the sea. Here are a few shops, where we took in our supplies for a two days' ramble, and engaged a guide, better acquainted with the country than the servant who accompanied us. He

had been in the service of an English gentleman who had resided in these parts many years. The next place we came to, travelling in the same direction, was Mar Elias (St. Elias) so called from two convents standing contiguous to one another, and dedicated to the saint of that name, the one Maronite, the other Greek Catholic. The situation of these religious establishments is extremely beautiful. At the extremity of a long corridor, in that belonging to the Maronites, is a window, commanding a view over the Mediterranean. At this end is a raised platform, with matting and cushions, the place of rendezvous to the monks in their hours of recreation. They had just dined, and were drinking their coffee. Amongst them was one, who having resided some time at Rome, had attained to great proficiency in the Italian language, consequently our conversation was more agreeable than when passing through the medium of an interpreter.

From hence we descended into a deep rocky valley, on the northern acclivity of which, and towards the bottom, stands the celebrated convent of Mar Hannah Shouair. We arrived there just as the inmates (to the number of forty or fifty) were sitting down to supper, in a low humid apartment, called the refectory, and at long narrow tables, on which was placed portions of salt fish, dried olives, and gritty cheese. Great as the disappointment was to our hungry stomachs, we put

a good face upon the matter, being quite unwilling to fare better than our hosts. This is the principal establishment of the Greek Roman Catholics in Syria.* Their patriarch resides at the monastery of Mar Mikayl (Michael), near Antoura. In dress, person, and mode of living, they put me strongly in mind of the Caloyeri in Greece. Their clothing is a dark blue shirt, drawers and waistcoat, over which is a surplice of coarse brown cloth, like that of other religious orders, but instead of a hood they wear on their heads a high cylindrical cap of felt, from beneath which their hair is allowed to float in long curly locks over the shoulders.

The rule of the order is that of St. Basil, which, it is well known, imposes severe austerities upon those who rigorously observe its discipline and regulations. They rise at five o'clock in the morning, and go to bed at nine. Of course, in a religious house, the greater part of the day is spent in prayer, but in the intervals which their devotions allow them, they are all, with the exception of the Superior, Purveyor, and Vicar, variously employed, in some way either necessary or useful to the establishment. For instance, one makes and mends clothes, another shoes for the community. Others again fill the professions of cook, baker, and wine-presser; even the repairs of the building are per-

* For a full and minute account of the Syrian Missions, see "Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses," vol. i., p. 140.

formed by one of the fraternity. Each one washes out his own linen; for this purpose there is a row of stone basins placed in the court, on a low parapet wall. Notwithstanding this constant activity, their diet throughout the year is meagre, animal food not being allowed them, except in cases of illness; and, like the schismatic Greeks, they have a number of fasts, which they as rigorously observe.

Mar Hannah, Oct. 1.—We visited this morning the Arabic printing press, to which the place owes much of its celebrity. It was established about the middle of the last century, by the brother of the then Superior, who had been brought up as an engraver. His name was Abdallah. This remarkable man not only founded the types, imitating the most beautiful handwriting, but distinguished himself by the elegance of his own works as an author. His skull stands upon a shelf in one of the rooms, as if looking down upon his pupils in this branch of industry; but, alas! *quantum mutati ab illo.* It is at present almost at a stand still, the expenses being found out of proportion to their resources. What a beautiful engine is here for extending civilization, were it only in competent hands; and how admirable the situation, for giving effect to all the advantages of which it is susceptible. It is in the valleys and recesses of Lebanon, the most thickly-inhabited portion of Syria: it is amongst a Chris-

tian population, enjoying a superior degree of civil and religious liberty, when compared with their brethren in the East, that the first attempts at civil regeneration should be made. If successful, the superior social condition of the mountaineers would soon be felt, appreciated, envied, and imitated by their Mussulman neighbours; and then the philanthropist might flatter himself, that the period was not far distant, when the tide of knowledge and religious instruction, from which we have derived so much of our well-being, would roll back its precious gifts to the shores from whence we first received them.

The establishment holds no lands, being Christians, but farms a considerable extent of ground of the emir of the district, which is that of Mitayne, the most northern portion of Libanus inhabited by a Druse population, and the culture of it is intrusted to the peasants, who pay them one half of the produce.

Leaving the convent of Mar Hannah, we visited the Druse villages of Shouair (from which it takes its name), Mitayne, Zebdy, Kornaille, Solima, and Rasel-Mitayne, where we slept. All those villages lie contiguous to one another, and each is distinguished by some remarkable building, the *serai*, or palace belonging to the Emir of the district in which it stands. The country through which we passed was well wooded, highly cultivated, and inhabited by fine peasantry, robust and

well made, and bearing in their countenances a degree of boldness and independence rarely seen in Turkey. But roughness of manners is not always inconsistent with kindness. Every Druse we met greeted us in a friendly manner, and readily stopped to direct us when we thought we had lost the way. In many instances, in passing before a garden or orchard, the children ran out towards us with baskets of figs, or grapes, pressing us to eat of the contents, but unwilling to accept of any remuneration in return.

The dress of the men is simple, consisting of a coarse woollen surtout or blouse, without sleeves, of black with white stripes, descending to the knees. The under garment is a long tunic (kombaz) of linen, with sleeves reaching to the wrist. The drawers are of the same stuff, but not worn so ample as in other parts of the Levant. A sash of white or red linen, with fringe ends, is tied round the waist. In this they wear their arms of defence, which consist of a brace of pistols, a dirk, and powder-flask; a musket and cartridge-box are slung across the shoulders. The turban is full, swelling out from the head, and flat at the top. The shoes are more European than Turkish, though of red and yellow leather, with a high instep, and strings of the same. This dress is uniform throughout, and occasions the Druse to be easily recognised. A distinction is only observed by the emir, and ministers of their religion: the

costume of the former resembling that of the Turks in power, while that of the latter differs only in point of colour, being confined to either white or black, and the absence of arms of defence.

At Ras-el Mitayne we proceeded direct to the Emir's house, as a thing of course, and were well received by him. After a very excellent supper, served in the Turkish fashion (the ladies eat apart), we slept on the divan in the receiving-room, the bedding being rolled up into alcoves during the day.—I should not omit to mention here, that among the Druses, the common people are extremely fond of raw meat; whenever a sheep is killed, the raw liver, heart, &c., are considered such dainties, that the children often steal into the kitchen to snatch up a morsel. I am told young women of the better classes indulge in this luxury, but the fact has not come within the range of my personal observation. Their favourite dish, the *kobbes*, which I have often tasted, is almost entirely composed of raw meat.

Oct. 2.—The country through which we passed this day, in its general features, did not differ essentially from that we had traversed the preceding one; but as we gradually retired from the coast, the villages stood at a greater distance from one another, and the vegetation became more scarce, for we evidently ascended as we advanced. The springs and water-courses were

every where very abundant. One in particular struck our attention for several hours together, as rolling a very considerable volume of water of the purest crystal, along an artificial channel, partly hewn and partly formed of masonry. It runs south, in the direction of Beteddein, where the Emir Beshir has a palace, and appears to be of recent construction.

Towards sunset we arrived at Deir-el-Kammar, and alighted at the Maronite convent. Soon after our arrival, I became suddenly indisposed, and could only account for my illness by recollecting that I had been exposed the two preceding days to a burning hot sun, and perhaps had drunk too freely at the fountains on the roadside, whilst heated. The European physician attached to the Emir Beshir's establishment was sent for, and I was put to bed, with a pulse running unusually high.

CHAPTER II.

Deir-el-Kammar—Visit to Beteddein — The Emir Beshir—Description of his Palace—Route to Damascus described—Protracted Illness of the Author—His Return to Beirout—Valley of Nahr-el-Kadhi — Ayn-Aanab — Ayn-Besaba — Valley of Ghadiry—Arrival at Beirout — M. Guys, the French Consul—Hoisting of the Tricoloured Flag—European Female Society.

DEIR-EL-KAMMAR, Oct. 3.—Though still unwell, I had sufficient strength to attend divine service, in the chapel of the convent. Mass was celebrated by the Pope's delegate, Monsignor Losanna, who happened to be here on his pastoral tour through this part of Syria. The service was in the Syriac language; but the epistle and gospel for the day were repeated aloud by the deacon in the language of the country (the Arabic), that the people might understand it. Three-fourths of the population are Maronites. At the close of the service I had an opportunity of judging, from a fair sample, of the beauty of the women of the country. They are a fine healthy-looking race, with ruddy complexions, like the inhabitants of Switzerland, and other

mountainous countries of the north. Instead of the horn worn by the Druse females, they wear over their heads a white piece of linen or muslin.

The town of Deir-el-Kammar,* a name signifying the "Monastery of the Moon," is situated at the head of a narrow valley, descending to the sea, from which it is distant about six hours. It lies in the district of El Shouf, and is at present the metropolis of the Druse principality, though the number of inhabitants does not exceed five or six thousand. The houses are all built of stone, and, generally speaking, denote wealth on the part of the owners; they extend over a great space of ground. The bazaars are large, and well supplied with such articles of dress as are worn by the mountaineers, and manufactured here. Some of the abbas, or silk gowns, interwoven with gold and silver, and worn by the principal Druse sheikhs, struck particularly our attention. But what is most worthy of notice are the tombs of the Christians. Every family has a stone building, about forty feet square—the rich ones have a cupola on their summit—in which they place their dead, the entrance being walled up after each deposit. This mode of interment, which is peculiar to Deir-el-Kammar, arose pro-

* So called from a Monastery that stood here, dedicated to the Virgin, who is generally represented in Syria with the moon beneath her feet.

bably from the difficulty of excavating graves in the rocky soil on which it is built.

In parts further removed from the town, the mulberry and vine are much cultivated. In the middle of the town there is a low building, in the Italian style, at present uninhabited. This was formerly the *serai*, or palace of the Emir Beshir. It is now appropriated to the reception of those strangers whom the Emir wishes more particularly to honour. His European physician occupies a part. The Emir resides at present at a village half a mile from Deir-el-Kammar, on the other side of the valley. The place is called Beteddein, a Syriac word, meaning "two teats," from the similarity of two neighbouring hills, upon one of which the village is built. Almost all the villages in this neighbourhood have Syriac names.

Deir-el-Kammar, Oct. 4.—Visit to Beteddein.—In a straight line, as a bird would fly, this eagle palace of the "Lord of Lebanon" appears close at hand, being perched on the summit of a neighbouring hill; but to reach it, one is obliged first to descend by a road winding to the bottom of the valley, and afterwards ascend by another zig-zag pathway on the other side. The castle is only approachable in one direction, which is that to the east: on every other side the mountain is steep and precipitous. On this side is the entrance gate, leading into a quadrangular court, surrounded on three of its sides by buildings, and open on the

fourth, where there is a fine view up the valley, and across it to Deir-el-Kammar. The area on which they stand is the actual rock, the top of the hill having been levelled for this purpose at considerable labour and expense. In the centre of the quadrangle is a beautiful marble fountain, to which water is conducted by an aqueduct from a source six hours distant. From the fountain it is conveyed by pipes to the different parts of the palace as required. The state apartments are to the south, consisting of an oblong building, closing the whole of this side of the court: the other two sides are occupied by apartments for stranger guests, rooms for servants, stables, kennels, and other offices. The centre piece of the main building is square, with a dome resting upon pointed arches, and supported by elegant columns: this is the grand receiving-room, and is furnished with raised divans all round, covered with rich cloths and cushions to lean against.

At the south-west angle is a small pavilion fitted up with the utmost costliness. The floor is of marble, with a fountain in the centre, of the same material. The sides and ceiling of the room are adorned with Arabesque paintings of exquisite taste: it is altogether a "chef-d'œuvre," and the attendants who show it watch, with a curious eye, the effect it produces on strangers. At the other extremity are the baths. Parallel to these buildings, and further to the south, is another range of

apartments, destined, when complete, for the harem or family of the Prince. They are separated from the former by a court of smaller dimensions, planted with trees. The whole is in an unfinished state, although it is now more than twenty years since it was first commenced.

Whilst sitting in the chamber assigned to me, and waiting to have a personal interview with the Emir, who was not yet up, I was taken suddenly ill with a fit of ague. As I had felt myself comparatively well the preceding day, I became confident that I had at length fallen into the clutches of that bane of travellers, the Intermittent. It lasted about an hour, during which the chill was so great, that several blankets thrown over me were unable to remove it, and was followed by a copious perspiration of three or four hours' continuance. As soon as I was in a state to be removed, I mounted my horse, and was reconducted to Deir-el-Kammar.

Oct. 5.—I availed myself of the day of health, which my malady allowed me, to return to Beteddein, and visit those parts of the palace which my illness the preceding day had prevented me from seeing. As I entered the court, the Emir himself, the great object of my curiosity, was pacing up and down the space which intervenes between the fountain and the low parapet wall overlooking the valley. He was surrounded by numerous attendants, in various coloured dresses,

but easily to be distinguished by the particular attention that was shown him. Judging from his appearance, I should say he was turned of sixty: his countenance is sharp and care-worn; his beard is grey, and reaches nearly to his girdle. Nearest to his person was a corpulent young man, with an unintelligent-looking countenance, who, I was told, was his son. The Emir had heard of my misfortune the preceding day, and expressed himself sorry that it should have occurred within his walls, adding that he was himself no stranger to the complaint.

After replying to a few inquiries respecting Mehemet Ali, Pacha of Egypt, whose country I had lately visited, unwilling to take up more of his time, I took leave and retired. In doing so he gave directions that I should have the best of fare in his house, to which he bade me welcome.* In several other parts of the court were picturesque groups of soldiers, sitting down by the sides of steeds richly caparisoned, whilst the owners, persons who had come from far and near, were in deep converse with the prince, apparently upon matters of importance. Others more timid, were anxiously waiting the moment to approach his highness, with papers in their hands, no doubt complaints of injustice, than which nothing is more common, in this land of oppression. I just peeped into the stables, I dared not do more, so great is the dread

* See Appendix, No. 5.

of the "evil eye" in this country, and saw a great number of very fine horses, all saddled and bridled, and ready to start at a moment's call; but I was cautious about praising one more than the other, for the reason just mentioned.

Oct. 6.—Laid up with a fever.—The approach of the cold fit is only announced by the patient's nails growing suddenly white, and by a chattering of the teeth. Oftentimes in the midst of a discourse he is obliged to stop short and lie down. In the afternoon I was well enough to sit out upon the terrace of the convent, overlooking a part of the town.

Oct. 8.—The fever again made its appearance this day, but evidently giving way to the *quinine*, which I had taken in the intervals. Chesney, finding me in a convalescent state, set out to return to Beirout.

Oct. 9.—My friend M. de Breuvery left Deir-el-Kammar this morning for Damascus. I accompanied him out of the town a part of the way. Caravans reckon three days' journey between the two places, though a well-mounted horseman might do it easily in two. At two hours from Deir-el-Kammar is Barouk, the principal village of the district of this name. From thence the road ascends the steep side of the higher region of the mountain, called Djebel Barouk, the crossing of which occupied my friend three hours and a half. In winter time, when covered with snow, it is quite

impassable. From the foot of the mountain, on the eastern side, where commences the great plain of the Bekaa, to the Liettani, which waters the latter, it is one hour more. Crossing the stream over a stone bridge, in twenty minutes the traveller arrives at Djob-el-Djennein, one of the principal villages of the Bekaa, situated on the declivity of the Anti-Libanus. Damascus is generally reckoned fourteen hours' journey from Djob-el-Djennein. On reaching the summit of the Anti-Libanus, the traveller descends into a pretty valley, watered by the Wady Halloue, at the extremity of which is Khan Doumas. It leads out upon an elevated uneven plain, called Szakhret-el-Sham of considerable extent. From thence he descends into the Ghouta or plain of Damascus, near the village of Mezze, standing amongst the gardens of the city, which, on this side extend for at least an hour from the walls.

Oct. 10.—The usual hour of attack I awaited with great anxiety this morning, but, thank God, the fever did not make its appearance.

Oct. 11.—Having succeeded, as I supposed, in shaking off my fever, I set out on my return to Beirout. At three o'clock in the morning, the muleteers were at the gates of the convent. Opening my window, and finding that it was still dark, and the air chilly, from the heavy mists which enveloped the town, I was desirous of deferring the hour of departure till sunrise, but was over-

ruled by the guides, who observed that no time was to be lost, if I wished to arrive at my destination before night. On leaving Deir-el-Kammar, we wound round the mountain's side till we came to the village of Kefernouta, embosomed amidst walnut trees, and having extensive vineyards in its neighbourhood. From hence we descended into a deep valley, through which flows the Nahr-el-Kadhi, "the Judge's river" (the ancient Tamyrus), which we had previously crossed, near its embouchure, in our way from Sidon to Beirout. The descent was rugged and steep, difficulties further increased by the obscurity of the night, so much so, that I found it necessary to alight and lead my horse; but even in this manner, from the unwillingness with which he followed me, it was evident I was a bad guide, and after a few minutes I found it safer to follow his footsteps than attempt to choose them for myself.

We crossed the river over a stone bridge called Djissr-el-Kadhi, leading to a grassy level of about an acre in extent. Here I awaited the dawn of day. Before it reaches the bridge, the river turns several mills that are built across it, whence falling in successive cascades over a rocky bed, and passing rapidly under the arches of the bridge, it rushes with much impetuosity in the direction of a ravine opening towards the sea. The spot is singularly romantic, and one in which an artist would delight, comprising as it does the elements of savage land-

scape—wood, rock, and water. The road from hence, for the space of half an hour, lay over some low hills prettily adorned with plantations of fir and oak trees. For another half hour it led up the steep sides of a higher range, the access to which was more difficult, the ground being rocky, and furrowed by rains and the constant passage of mules and travellers. But we were amply repaid for our fatigues on attaining the summit of the mountain; the sea (the Mediterranean) suddenly and unexpectedly presenting itself before us in placid beauty, and bearing on its dark blue surface, here and there, the picturesque vessels of the country, with distended sails but apparently motionless; whilst at our feet lay a fine verdant and well-wooded plain, extending for some miles north and south. In general, but more particularly on the ocean, the reader must have observed that the neighbourhood of the sea is marked by sterility; but along the coast of Syria, trees are as abundant, and the vegetation as rich, as it is in the interior.

Descending from our high position, in one hour we reached Ayn-Aanab. *Ayn*, in the language of the country, signifies a "spring," or "fountain," of which the mountain here is full, as the names of several villages in the vicinity denote. Some of them form very pretty cascades. Close to this village is a clump of palm-trees, an unusual sight at so great an elevation above the sea. In half an

hour we came to Ayn-Besaba, where being attracted by the beauty of the spot, and a fine spring, we alighted to breakfast. The water, clear and cool, is enclosed by masonry, and shaded by an oak tree of unusually large growth. I little anticipated meeting with any thing like an inn on this road, and had therefore taken in a supply of provisions for the journey; but I was agreeably surprised on being presented with a dish of *becca ficas*, from a house close by the fountain. At this season of the year they are taken in large quantities with bird-lime, and are esteemed a great delicacy. The price demanded was only twenty paras, or twopence, all ready prepared for roasting. We were also supplied with fruit and coffee upon the same moderate terms.

In the afternoon, having taken my *siesta* on the grassy margin of the fountain, I descended into the wady or valley of Ghadiry, of which Kefr Shyna is the most conspicuous village. Upon the hills, three quarters of an hour south-east of the place where the Ghadiry falls into the sea, stands the convent of Mar Hannah-el-Shoeyfat. Crossing the wady, and after three hours' delightful ride, passing through the country distinguished by the appellation of Ard-el-Beradjene, studded with olive plantations, I entered Beirout about sunset, and took up my quarters at the inn where I had previously lodged on my arrival from Sidon.

Oct. 12.—Dined with M. Henri Guys, the French

Consul. M. Guys occupies one of the best houses in Beirout: besides being very capacious, it commands a fine view of the sea from the terrace which surmounts it. At one angle of this upper court, we first saw floating those colours which we had hitherto been taught to look upon as the standard of rebellion. A French brig of war, which had recently arrived on the coast, had officially authorized its erection, and thus relieved the consuls, who were uncertain of the issue of the struggle at home, from their temporary embarrassment. M. Guys, from his long residence in the Levant, is well acquainted with the country and its antiquities, and in this respect his services to travellers are not less known, than his practice of hospitality has been felt, by all those who have visited Syria, of whatever nation they may be. His lady, who is also a native of France, to the advantages with which nature has endowed her, has added those which education alone can confer, qualities rarely found united in persons of her sex in these parts. Though the time I spent in her amiable company was limited to a few days, I hope I do not commit an indiscretion, in recording in this part of my journal, how much even in this short interval of intellectual enjoyment, I wavered in the resolution I had taken of continuing my vagabond life, by which I had become a voluntary exile from female society, though still

conscious of its benign and humanizing influence. The sequel will show in what manner the struggle terminated, and which of these conflicting *penchants* ultimately gained the ascendancy.

To the seclusion of women in the East, may perhaps be attributed some very opposite results to society. Amongst the Mussulman portion for instance, where the sexes are not allowed to meet, they are necessarily in a great degree strangers to the passion of love; hence a certain coldness of manner, bordering on asperity, which distinguishes the men in their intercourse with one another. Moreover, being accustomed to command at home, when circumstances bring them into subjection abroad, they betray an irritability and impatience of control which is often fatal to the objects of their resentment. On the other hand, the women, victims of this non-intercourse system, finding themselves deprived of the station which nature had destined them to occupy and adorn, and being left without the more powerful incentives to virtue, self-esteem, and the esteem of others, are necessarily neglectful of the culture of their minds, their education being bounded by the useful; and if viciously inclined, they are only restrained by physical impediments from abandoning themselves to the real or supposed licentiousness of their sex.

Oct. 13.—M. de Cadalvene, who is still suffer-

ing from renewed attacks of fever, was this morning carried on board the Austrian brig of war, that has for some days past been lying in the roads. We confidently hope that a change of air will have the desired effect, and that our separation will be only temporary.

CHAPTER III.

Departure from Beirout—St. George and the Dragon—Nahr-el-Leban—El Mellaha—Ras Nahr-el-Kelb—Ancient Sculptures on the Rocks—Nahr-el-Kelb, the ancient Lycus—Entrance into Kesrouan — Antoura — Ayn Warka — Harissa — Bezommar — Ghadsir—District of Fetoueh—Nahr Ibrahim, the ancient Adonis—Djebail, the ancient Byblus—Batroun, the ancient Botrus —Route along the Coast to Tripoli—District of El Koura—Amyoun—Ancient Temples—Keiftein—Arrival at Tripoli.

Beirout, Oct. 13.—My friend, Captain Chesney, being anxious to arrive at Damascus, from whence a small caravan was about to start for Bagdad, by way of Palmyra and the Desert, this morning availed himself of the departure of a merchant vessel starting for Tripoli, to accelerate the accomplishment of his views, intending to take the Cedars and Balbec in his route. For my own part, being desirous of first visiting that portion of the mountain of Libanus usually known by the name of the Kesrouan, or Castravan chain, I was unable to accompany him any further, although I did not abandon all hopes of over-

taking him at Damascus; but I sent my heavy baggage by this conveyance, by which means I was better prepared for excursions in a mountainous country. Wanting a companion, I engaged a young Maronite, the son of a petty merchant of this place, to accompany me in this expedition. He was a fine intelligent youth, of a cheerful disposition, and possessing an ardour for acquiring knowledge quite uncommon in his countrymen. His Christian name was Hannah (John). Having some business to transact in Tripoli and in Damascus, and moreover, having as yet travelled but little in the country in which he was born, in accepting my invitation he expected to combine the double object of utility and instruction.

We left Beirout about three in the afternoon, upon two mules, accompanied by a boy on foot to take charge of them during the journey, and bring them back to the owner when finished. In about an hour (our course was due east) we came to a place where my Maronite friend, a lover of legends, told me the renowned St. George destroyed the dragon.* A small chapel, commemorative of the event, was erected, and originally dedicated to that Christian hero, but it has since been converted into a mosque. Continuing our route in the same direction, we shortly reached the Nahr-el-Leban, or "River of Milk," so called from the colour it takes when swollen by the

* See Appendix, No. 6.

rains which fall in the mountains. We crossed it over a bridge of six arches, apparently of Roman construction. On its banks we gathered some of the reeds of which the *calami*, or eastern pens are made. The better sort are found on the banks of the Tigris, near Bagdad.

From hence we passed through a succession of mulberry plantations, most of them enclosed, till reaching the easternmost point of the plain of Beirout, we turned abruptly to the north, and for an hour and a half rode over a sandy beach, which brought us to the foot of the promontory called Ras Nahr-el-Kelb. On its southern side there is a square basin hewn in the rock, close to the sea, into which the salt water is admitted, for the purpose of making salt by evaporation. The place is called El Mellaha, derived from the Arabic word *melh*, meaning "salt." This remarkable projection (the promontory just mentioned), admitting of no natural passage between it and the sea, an artificial one has been formed by cutting away the inequalities of the rock to reduce it to a level, and filling up the fissures with masonry. The road thus formed is little more than two yards in breadth, and is at a considerable height above the level of the sea. From an inscription which is engraved on the side of the rock, this appears to be the work of the Emperor Antoninus.

Amongst the rocks which overhang it to the east, and which here rise to the height of fifty or

sixty feet, there are traces of a more ancient road, before the present more convenient one was cut. Here, in the scarped face of the rock fronting the sea, are several sculptured tablets, varying in style, subject, and dimensions, but all bearing marks of the highest antiquity. Having previously seen drawings of these monuments at the house of M. Henri Guys, the French consul at Beirout, I clambered up to examine them more minutely, otherwise I should perhaps have passed them by like most other travellers have done, supposing them to be the work of soldiery in their idle hours, and commemorative of the exploits of the chiefs under whom they fought, this being naturally a strong military pass in the communications along the coast.

On a closer inspection, though much corroded by time and exposure to the blasts of the sea, they are evidently workmanship of a superior kind, and executed by first-rate artists, though of two different nations, and consequently of various epocha. In one instance, Egyptian hieroglyphs are cut into the tablets, and in the frame round them, which is square, the same cartouches as I had seen at the Ramseium at Thebes, are apparent. The second class of sculptures are distinguished by having had their surfaces covered with inscriptions, in the arrow-headed or cuneiform character, but now nearly obliterated, and by being arched at the top. The most remarkable

of these tablets, and the best preserved, perhaps owing to its more elevated position, is one containing an upright figure of a man carved in low relief, and habited like the modern Persians, both as regards the tunic and the cap (which is also that of the ancient Phrygians), and wearing a long beard tapering to a point. The attitude of this personage, who is looking to the left, is sideways, as regards the spectator; consequently the profile alone is seen. His left hand rests on his breast, his right hand is raised towards his eyes, which seem directed towards an object it supported, but now nearly effaced. In the left quarter of the tablet, above it, are several symbolical signs, amongst which a crescent and a globe are discernible. The whole surface of the tablet, from the waist of the figure downwards, is covered with inscriptions of the character already mentioned.

Without venturing to interpret these singular sculptures, or to assign a period for their execution, I can safely recommend them to the attention of future travellers, as being monuments of very great interest to the antiquarian world.* Near the northern extremity of this promontory, and by the roadside, stands a pedestal, which the natives think once supported the statue of a dog; and in the sea, at the distance of a few yards from the shore, a black shapeless rock is still shown as being the idol in question. Probably it was a

* See Appendix, No. 7.

statue of the Emperor himself, who constructed the road.

This mountain barrier forms the southern limit of the district of the Kesrouan, which extends itself nearly as far northward as Nahr Ibrahim. It is about three hours and a half in length, and from two to three hours in breadth across the mountains. Though almost exclusively inhabited by Christians, it is under the jurisdiction of the Druse Sheikh Beshir of the family of Khazan. Its principal and almost sole produce is silk; mulberry-trees being the chief growth of the soil. The miri, or land-tax, is taken upon the mulberry-leaves picked and collected by the village Sheikhs, who likewise fix the contributions to be paid by each village, in cases of an extraordinary levy being made upon the province. They are represented as not being more exempt from extortion than other Christians living under the Turkish yoke; yet such is the value they attach to the free exercise of their religion, that they submit to them with resignation.*

The passage over the promontory is about a quarter of an hour in extent. Descending its northern side, we shortly came to the Nahr-el-Kelb, or "Dog river," issuing abruptly from between two steep mountains; it is the Lycus of the Greeks, sometimes called Canis, of which the Turkish word is a translation. We crossed it by a

* See Appendix, No. 8.

modern and well-constructed bridge of six arches at a short distance from where it enters the sea. Here we quitted the coast, and bent our course into the interior. In one hour we arrived at Zouk* Mikayl (Michael), the principal village of the Kesrouan, and the residence of the Sheikh Beshora of the family of Khazan, the governor of the province. It has a small bazaar, furnishing to the inhabitants of the Kesrouan articles of dress and luxury. The saddlers' and shoemakers' shops are the most numerous. In this hilly country they are both very useful artisans. We had an instance of this in our approach to this place. Hannah's horse, in passing over some stones, fell with him, the girths broke, and could only be repaired here. I gave the boy Ibrahim a pair of new shoes, for which he appeared very thankful. These young conductors will sometimes walk eight or ten hours by the horse's side, without showing any signs of fatigue, and this for several days together.

Resuming our journey, in a quarter of an hour we reached Deir Beshara, where there is a convent of nuns. In one hour more we arrived at Antoura. In the latter part of our journey, it being night, we were losing our way, when, by taking the direction of some lights which appeared at the windows of the convent, we finally reached our destination. The inmates were at supper, and I was conducted

* An appellation often attached to places which have periodical markets.

into the refectory to join them. I was agreeably surprised on entering the room, to hear myself greeted in the languages of Europe, by several young men, who had come hither to study Arabic. Few places could have been better chosen for the purpose, on account of the seclusion, and the healthiness of the climate, although the dialect spoken here is not the most pure. The scene reminded me much of college life; but with this main difference, that no particular discipline is observed. Some of the students intended to remain in the country; others to return to their homes; whilst others again were only travellers.

One French gentleman, M. B——, who had already circumnavigated the globe, was now preparing to explore the peninsula of Arabia. We sat up nearly the whole night, conversing, comparing notes, and exchanging information upon countries we had respectively visited. Hours flew like moments, so intense is the sympathy that reigns between travellers meeting upon a foreign soil. To tell the honest truth, our conviviality was not a little stimulated by quaffing large goblets of the *vino d'oro* of Lebanon, so called from its colour, and which was the wine so highly extolled by Grecian and Roman epicures. It was, indeed, excellent.

ANTOURA, Oct. 15.—This establishment, and a similar one for females, called "the Visitation," was first set on foot by the Jesuits. On the de-

struction of that order in 1759, they were succeeded in the mission by the Lazarists, who are still in possession of it, but only one member is resident here at present, to officiate and assist the Pope's delegate, who returns here in the winter from Kanobin, in the Upper Libanus. There is nothing remarkable in the building, but the situation is good, and the prospect from it, extending over the valley which separates it from the sea, and round the bay of Kesrouan, extremely beautiful. The view is bounded to the eastward by the barren heights of Sannin, one of the most elevated ridges of Lebanon. The chapel is small, but neat, and decorated with good taste. In the garden I observed two orange-trees, as large and luxuriant in their growth as any I have ever seen, even in Portugal. I likewise noticed here the mode of training the jasmine plant for pipe-sticks. As soon as it has attained a certain height, it is drawn across the bough of a larger tree, and a weight, usually a good-sized stone, is attached to its nether end, to make it grow in a perpendicular line. It then becomes a very good substitute for the cherry stick, of which they are more usually made.

After breakfast, notwithstanding a slight shower (the first seen since February), I set out from Antoura for the large convent of Bekerke. Although it appeared close at hand, we only reached it at the end of an hour, having been obliged to make a circuitous route, in consequence of the

deep ravine that intervened. I now began to feel the inconvenience of travelling in this hilly district, where one is perpetually mounting or descending, and without the advantage of good roads. They are rugged in the extreme, being cut up by winter torrents, and in the rainy season must be almost impassable. Some of the precipices along which it is necessary to pass are quite terrific.* The place called El Kourket is a ridge of hills to the north-west of Antoura, overlooking the sea to the west, and towards the south affording a prospect of the town and roadstead of Beirout, two leagues distant. Here, upon an elevated brow stands the large Maronite convent of Bekerke, where the patriarch usually resides in winter. It was here, or rather in this neighbourhood, that Khazen, the Maronite damsel, whose life and extravagancies Volney has given an account of, resided about the middle of the last century. The convent which was destroyed some time ago, is now undergoing vast repairs, and, when completed, promises to be one of the most remarkable edifices in the province.

From hence we proceeded to Harissa, distant about three quarters of an hour, in a northerly direction, where there is a well-built convent belonging to the Franciscan monks of Terra Santa, standing upon a conical eminence close to the sea. The view from the terrace along the

* See Appendix, No. 9.

coast as far as Djebail, and the bay of Kesrouan on the other side, is extremely beautiful. Here I received a hearty welcome from the German friar, whom I had accompanied from Nazareth to Acre. He was delighted to converse with a stranger, even for a few hours, having no other companions in his solitude than two friars, though there is accommodation for a great many more. During the war between England and the Porte, Mr. Barker, British Consul at Aleppo, and now of Alexandria, resided here two or three years, under the protection of the Emir Beshir. It is a delightful place of retirement.

In the afternoon, I set out for the convent of Bezommar, situated on the highest summit of the mountains of Kesrouan, which is a branch of the Southern Libanus. I arrived there in one hour. I passed on the road, to the right, the convent of Es Sharfe, belonging to the true Syrian church; it is situated at the entrance of a stony valley, reaching down to the village of Deir Aoun. On the opposite side of the valley is the Maronite convent of Mar Shalleitta. The soil about here is of a reddish colour, and the rock beneath it a quartzose sandstone. At this point we were overtaken by a heavy shower of rain. At first, we sought shelter under some fine fir-trees which border the road, but the storm continuing, accompanied by thunder and lightning, our temporary asylum became both unpleasant and insecure;

we therefore moved on. Nothing in sound can be more awfully grand, than the loud peals and prolonged echoes of thunder, as heard amidst these rocky recesses, and along the lengthened valleys at our feet.

I arrived at Bezommar quite drenched to the skin, and in a most pitiable plight. Even in my saddle-bags I could hardly find a single article of dress that had not suffered from the wet. After a hasty *toilette*, I waited upon the Armenian patriarch. I found him seated at a large circular window, overlooking the valley of the Kesrouan, and listening to the storm. By his side, on the divan, were three or four bishops, one of whom could speak Italian, having resided at Rome, where an establishment had been given to them by the Pope. My companion, who was a Maronite, approached the patriarch with great respect, kneeling and kissing his hand, which he afterwards repeated to the bishops. I was received with all the ceremony that accompanies a visit to a pacha: sherbet, pipes, and coffee being served, and numerous domestics standing attentive at the door. Bezommar is the seat of the patriarch, or spiritual head of all the Armenian Catholics in the East. He is assisted by several bishops, and about twenty or thirty monks. It is the finest and richest convent of Kesrouan, having been recently rebuilt from its foundations, at a very heavy expense. The income belonging to it is

very considerable, and is derived partly from its landed possessions, and partly from benefactions from persons in Constantinople, in Asia Minor, and in Syria. It educates an indefinite number of boys, who are destined for holy orders. I counted about twelve. Some of them could speak a few words of Latin. The books they had before them were in the Armenian language, and printed at Venice, where many of their rich brethren reside, enjoying fortunes made in India, and in the Levant.

Oct. 16.—Descending from Bezommar, in the direction of the sea, in about half an hour, I arrived at the borders of a picturesque valley, closed on every side except the west, where was an opening admitting a view of the sea. Here I was obliged to alight. The descent into the valley is by a zigzag pathway winding down its sides, which are thickly clothed with vegetation; whilst in its concave parts the cultivable soil is supported by terraces formed of dry masonry, which, when viewed at a distance, have the appearance of the seats of an amphitheatre. All the mountains in this hilly district are farmed in this manner, though it not unfrequently happens that these artificial embankments are carried away by the waters of the melted snow. In some places, I have counted as many as fifty tiers, one above the other, from the bottom of the valley to the top of the hill. The earth they support is either sown with grain, or

planted with vines or mulberry-trees. In looking round for the horses which we had left behind, to follow us of themselves, we frequently saw them over our heads, hesitating at the brink of a precipice, but ultimately obliged to seek a descent in another direction.

Nearly at the bottom of the valley, and prettily situated on a woody knoll, is the Maronite convent of Ayn Warka, taking its name from a small village close by, the only one within sight, so completely is the valley shut out from the rest of the world. The building itself is in a neglected state, from want of funds to make the necessary repairs. On entering the court-yard, I found seven or eight youths sitting under the shade of a fine sycamore, with books by their sides. I was told they were studying for the clerical profession. The master, dressed in a common peasant's dress, from some unaccountable cause, received me very coldly. He answered my inquiries (he could speak Italian) about his establishment, with a laconism that made me perceive that my visit was not agreeable. Upon questioning the boys respecting the progress they had made in their studies, they evinced in their answers no emulation. An air of languor reigned over the place, and I retired, beginning to feel its effects upon myself.

The ascent out of the valley of Ayn Warka was fatiguing, particularly as, out of compassion for the horses, I was obliged to perform it on foot. We

had no sooner reached the summit, than, crossing a small plateau, we re-descended into another valley to the north, where villages and convents innumerable, and situated as imposingly as those we had visited the preceding day, appeared before us on every side. In one hour and a half from Ayn Warka we reached the convents of Kereim and Baklous, occupying eminences overlooking the sea. The former is an extensive building, apparently new, and more like the monasteries of Europe than any I have yet seen in these parts. It belongs to the Armenian Catholics, of whom there are a great number here, monks and students. Each has his separate chamber on either side of a long corridor, and fitted up with neatness and simplicity. On the western side, the chambers look out upon the sea; on the eastern, upon the mountain. Below the convent stands the village of El Basha. At noon we arrived at Ghadsir, a considerable village, and apparently a place of some traffic. We alighted at a convent inhabited by two monks, Lazarists, who showed us every possible attention, and pressed us to remain with them a few days, an invitation I should gladly have accepted had my time not been limited. It is one of the most cheerful-looking places in the whole district of Kesrouan, and its situation is one of the most agreeable.

In the afternoon I set out for Djebail, distant from Ghadsir about six hours. Descending towards the coast we shortly came to a ruined bridge,

called Djissr Maammiltein, crossing a deep wady* of this name. The banks of this wady form the boundary of separation between the pachalics of Tsaida and Tripoli, and divide the district of Kesrouan from that of El Fetoueh. The latter territory extends as far as wady Medfoun, a little to the southward of Batroun, and is composed of a succession of low naked hills, forming the lower range of Libanus, towards the coast. The northern bank of the wady is an elevated tongue of land, forming the extreme point of the bay of Kesrouan on this side. An ancient tower, called Berdj-el-Koszeir, stands on its summit and below it is a small harbour, called Meinet-Berdja, with a few houses round it. Boats from Cyprus occasionally land here, loaded principally with wheat and salt.

In one hour from the port we arrived at the banks of a considerable river, called Nahr Ibrahim (Abraham), the ancient Adonis. I cannot ascertain whence the modern name is derived, but we know that the whole of this tract of country, from Lebanon to the sea, is the scene of the legend (fabulous or astronomical) of the sports and death of Adonis, the hunter, whom Venus is fabled to have loved and lamented.† The country about here is thinly inhabited, and has a wild inhospitable

* This word, pronounced *ouadi*, signifies a valley, or ravine, watered by a torrent.

† See Appendix, No. 10.

appearance, the effect of which was heightened by nightfall, which surprised us at this point and occasioned us some uneasiness, as we had still two hours and a half to travel, before we could reach Djebail. Wild boars are said to be very numerous in the neighbouring mountains, and in severe winters commit great ravages in the plain. The Turks kill them, by waiting for them by moonlight, concealed behind rocks, but do not eat them; their flesh, like that of the domestic animal, being looked upon as unclean.

When within a short distance of Djebail, we passed another ancient watch-tower, standing upon a rock over the sea; the natives call it Berdj-um-Heish. My guide, who was walking on in advance, and apparently addressing somebody who inhabited the tower, received for answer to every interrogatory, the word "*eish*," which in the vulgar dialect means "what?" Surprised at such determined laconism, I inquired the meaning, of Hannah, who explained it to me by saying that the lad was amusing himself with interrogating an echo, for which the place is remarkable, taking care that the last syllable should always be the word just mentioned. Many names of places in these countries have trivial origins of this kind, the more ancient ones having been replaced by words expressive of their physical appearance. We did not reach Djebail until very late. My guide conducted me to the Maronite convent,

where I met with a very kind reception. The monks were just sitting down to supper. They apologized for their humble fare, which at that late hour they said they were unable to improve. I begged of them not to give themselves uneasiness on my account, assuring them, that though an European, in my long travels I had become inured to the privations attendant upon a tour in the East. They could not accommodate me with a bed, but I slept comfortably on the divan, in the receiving-room. My companion lay stretched on the carpet at my feet.

Oct. 17.—Djebail or Gebyle, the ancient Byblus, a considerable seaport town under the kings of Antioch, is enclosed by a wall of moderate height, about a mile and a half in circumference, with square towers at intervals. They may possibly be built on the foundation of the ancient ones, but what now appears is of the time of the Crusades. It was early taken by the latter, and in the destructive wars which ensued, it shared the fate of the other cities of the coast. The port is destroyed, and trade has fled in consequence. Large vacant spaces appear on every side, formerly occupied by houses, and the shops in the bazaar are nearly all shut up. The few inhabitants that remain are chiefly Maronites, who cultivate the soil which lies about the town, and which is peculiarly favourable for the growth of the tobacco plant. The antiquities at Djebail are mostly Ro-

man. The city gate, the only one on the land side, appears from the fragment of an inscription, built into a house close to it, to have been restored by the Emperor Adrian.

A little to the south of the gate stands an old castle of rusticated work, having stones of a prodigious size. There is a fine view from the top over a neighbouring plain, and along the coast either way. Near the Maronite convent are the remains of a handsome church of very high antiquity. Several ancient pieces of sculpture, some bearing Greek inscriptions, are worked into the walls. In and about the town, shafts of columns of a fine red granite are every where to be met with, but they are rudely cut, and of very ugly proportions.

Djebail is one day's journey from Tripoli. Though my destination was to the latter place, I did not go thither by the direct road, along the coast, intending to visit the district called El Koura, and inhabited exclusively by Christians. It lies to the north-east of Djebail. I followed it, however, for about three hours and a half, as far as Batroun, over very rugged ground, the coast in this part being formed of sand accumulated by the prevailing westerly winds, and hardened into rocks. To the eastward, a line of low naked hills runs parallel with the shore, leaving in the interval a narrow plain, cultivated with cotton and tobacco, but thinly inhabited. In one of these hills lies

the quarry of Schistus stones, the flakes of which bear the impressions of plants, fish, and shells. As I had seen specimens at a friend's house in Beirout, and was moreover pressed for time, I did not go out of my way to see the place where they were found. The territory of Batroun commences at Djissr Medfoun, about three quarters of an hour south of the town, and extends to the Djebel Nourye the southern limit of that of El Koura.

Batroun, supposed to be the ancient Bostrys, lies a little to the westward of the road to Tripoli. There are no traces of walls or ancient buildings here, but there are the remains of a church and monastery of the middle ages, in a ruinous state. It is an episcopal see, and gives title to one of the Maronite prelates, as well as Djebail. The inhabitants are chiefly Maronites. There is no natural port, but an artificial inlet has been formed in the rock, affording shelter to a few fishing-boats in bad weather; consequently there is no trade. Like Djebail, the town and its territory belongs to the Emir Beshir, but it is without any resources whatever. I absolutely could not purchase either bread, meat, or fish; I therefore left it at the end of an hour's halt, intending to sleep at Amyoun, if I could reach it in time.

The direct road from hence to Tripoli lies over the Djebel Nourye, a little to the north of the town, forming the high promontory, called Ras-

el-Shakka.* It is steep and rugged. On its summit, overlooking the sea, is the celebrated Greek convent called Belmont, founded by one of the Counts of Tripoli. On the other side, following the line of coast, at two hours and a half from the promontory, is the village of Kalemon, probably the ancient Calamos. It is about two hours more to Tripoli.

Quitting the coast and striking across the plain in a north-easterly direction, in half an hour I entered a narrow valley, called Wady Massabeha, taking its name from a stream which flows through it towards the sea. The northern boundary of this ravine is the Djebel Nourye, just mentioned. To the south it is bounded by a mountain of less elevation. At the foot of the former is the village of Kobba, and near it an ancient tower. We crossed the stream over a stone bridge, and in half an hour came to a castle of modern construction, called Kalaat Massabeha, standing upon an insular rock in the narrowest part of the valley, which it commands, it not being more than ten minutes broad in this part. The rock is steep and inaccessible to animals, and I was too much pressed for time to alight and enter; but I halted several minutes to contemplate this picturesque ruin sur-

* Maundrell supposes this promontory to be that which Strabo calls το τοῦ Θεοῦ Προσωπον—Theoprosopon, "the Face of God," assigned by him for the end of Mount Libanus.

rounded by the richest vegetation. The whole of this secluded valley is well wooded.

Soon after we had passed the castle, we commenced ascending the mountainous ridge lying to the north. A rugged path winds up its almost perpendicular sides, and is scarcely passable for mules. I thought I should have sunk under the fatigue, being obliged to alight, though scarcely able to walk from exhaustion, not having tasted food since the morning. At the end of an hour's difficult ascent, we reached a fine spring with a vaulted covering to it, called Ayn-el-Khowedj. Here we halted to refresh, and smoke, a pleasure almost as great as the repast itself to the eastern traveller, when fatigued.

Resuming our journey, we wandered over barren hills and along dark and gloomy glens, without a single habitation meeting the eye, or a living creature of whom to inquire the road. Several times, after rending the air with our united shoutings, in the hope of attracting attention—the valleys alone replied, as if in mockery of our woes—we halted, and sat down in despair. Nothing could equal the distress of poor Ibrahim, who cried bitterly; being quite persuaded that we were to be robbed, and that he was to return home to his master without the horses that had been confided to his care. There were, indeed, grounds for alarm.

At the end of two hours and a half, guided by some lights seen in the distance, we reached Amyoun,

the chief place in the district of El Koura, and the residence of the governor of the province. Nevertheless, it was with much difficulty we could obtain a night's lodging; and it was only after remaining out in the cold night-air for some time, that I was allowed to enter an unoccupied house, without an article of furniture in it. I attributed this apparent inhospitality to my being accompanied by a Maronite, the inhabitants being chiefly Greek schismatics. As soon as a fire was lighted, and I had taken a cup of coffee, I sent the guide out to buy some provisions. At the end of an hour he returned with half a dozen eggs, some butter, a little coarse bread, and a basin of milk. At any other moment, I should, perhaps, have bewailed my fate, after a hard day's journey; but in the present case, I was not disposed to be difficult, or to quarrel with the people for their unkindness. They crowded into the room, and sat down before me without being invited: nor did they scruple to ask me for tobacco, a species of intrusion I put an end to, when the supper was over, by turning them out, and bolting the door within.

Oct. 19.—I left my uncomfortable quarters at an early hour.—Half an hour from Amyoun to the south-east is the village of Beshiza. The valley in which it stands is watered by one of those treacherous mountain torrents, apparently most innocent in summer, but which in winter, and in the rainy season, swelling, and exceeding their

boundaries, carry mischief and destruction all around. The ruins of several mills stand evidences of its guilt. It is called Nahr Aszfour.

Close to this village, but detached from any other building, is a ruined temple, called by the natives *Kenyset-el-Awamyd*, "the Church of the Columns." In form it is nearly quadrangular, being ten paces long within the walls, by eight in breadth. The roof has fallen in, as also the eastern wall. The other three are still standing, though that to the south has been thrown out of its perpendicular, from which we may conclude that the whole building had been at some period violently shaken by an earthquake. The northern walls have two curves, about twelve feet in depth, vaulted like niches as high as the roof. The portico consisted of four Ionic columns, about eighteen feet high, each of a single stone; three are still standing. Opposite to each column is a corresponding pilaster in the wall of the temple. The door and its soffit, formed of a single stone, are ornamented with very rich sculptures. In the midst of the building stands a large and venerable oak, whose branches overshadow the temple and supply the place of the roof, rendering the ruin a highly picturesque object. As this was the first Grecian monument that I had seen since I quitted Greece, I looked upon it with peculiar interest, and remained a long while in its vicinity.

From hence we turned into the mountains to

the north-east, which are a lower range of Libanus, and in half an hour reached the ruins of an ancient town, known to the natives by the appellation of Naous, probably a corruption of the Greek word ναος, signifying a temple, there being still the remains of two edifices answering to this description. The larger one stood in an area, sixty paces in length by fifty in breadth, surrounded by a wall built with large blocks of well-cut stone. The entrance to this area was by a gate still entire, consisting of two upright posts, and a soffit, each formed of a single stone. The temple stood upon an elevated platform in the centre of the area. It is now a mere heap of ruins; columns, capitals, and friezes, lying in confused masses one upon the other. From the fragments it appears to have been of the Corinthian order, though not of the best period of the art. The outer temple, which is of much smaller dimensions, stands at about one hundred and fifty yards distance to the east. It is an oblong building, constructed of large square stones, and had a portico of columns with a flight of steps leading up to it.

The site of these ruins commands a beautiful view over the Koura down to the sea. Tripoli bears north. The nearest habitable spot is Deir Demitry, a convent dedicated to St. Demetrius, one of the highly venerated saints of the Greek calendar, situated on the declivity below, at the eastern extremity of the plain. We found here

only two solitary monks, apparently in great poverty, but who, nevertheless, offered to share with us their modest breakfast, consisting of fried eggs, bread, and *yaghourt*. I left the convent about noon, and proceeding along the side of the mountain, we shortly arrived at a considerable village called Kesbea. In twenty minutes we passed another convent, called Hantoura.

Descending into the plain we shortly came to Keffer Akka, and stretching along the base of the mountain, in one hour from Keffer Akka, we entered some extensive olive plantations, occupying the space lying between the Djebel Kella, to the south, and the river Kadisha. I observed the same care and attention bestowed upon this plant here, as in Corfu, and other civilized places; the ground being ploughed up between the trees to retain the moisture, whilst the earth is heaped up round the stems, to prevent the sun from hurting the roots. The district on the opposite side of the deep ravine, through which flows the Kadisha, is called the Zawye. It is equally rich in oil and grain. The inhabitants are almost all Maronites.

After passing through the village of Beserma, in three hours we arrived at Deir Keiftein, so called from a small Greek convent in its vicinity. In the enclosed cemetery, attached to it, we noticed amongst several tombs erected to Europeans who had died on this coast, one more handsome than

the rest, being of marble, and bearing sculptures, and a long inscription in English (with a Latin translation on the other side), recording the virtues of one John Carew, a native of Wales, who for fifty years was British Consul at Tripoli. He died in the year 1747.

The road from hence to Tripoli lies through a continuation of the wood of olive-trees just described. They occupy the lowest declivity of Libanus. In one hour and a half more we reached the castle, which overhangs the city to the south. The view that meets the traveller's eye at this point, on arriving from the interior, is truly beautiful. It extends over a verdant plain of a triangular form, having for its vertex a flat promontory towards the sea. At its base is the neat and compact town of Tripoli, extending itself for nearly a mile in a north and southerly direction, at the foot of the rocky height, on which we are standing. A green belt, formed by orange and mulberry plantations, surrounds the town on three of its sides, extending a great way into the plain.

The city itself is not without its share of verdure. A vast number of dark green cypresses are seen shooting up aloft from amidst the courts and gardens attached to almost every house; and a refreshing relief is thereby given to the otherwise monotonous aspect of a town, constructed almost entirely of the same material,—here it is a stone

of a darkish colour, approaching to gray. In front, a chain of insulated towers borders the coast; and to the southward of these lies the port of Tripoli. In a N.N.E. direction from the harbour extends a line of small islands, the farthest of which is about ten miles distant from the main land.

To the north, and at our feet, is the deep valley of Kadisha, luxuriant in vegetation, and rich in scenery of the most picturesque description. It is altogether one of the most agreeable panoramic views in Syria, as it is also one of the more favourite places of resort with the inhabitants of Tripoli, on their respective sabbath and feast days. The castle is an old Saracen building, and is supposed to date as far back as the time of the Crusades. We did not attempt to enter it. Turkish soldiers are the most detestable portion of its population, and should always be avoided if possible.

Descending the hill, in ten minutes we entered Tripoli, and proceeded to the house of Mr. Katziflis, the British Agent, to whom we had brought letters of introduction from Mr. Barker, of Alexandria. Mr. Katziflis and his brother are of Greek extraction, the eldest has just succeeded his father in his consular functions. The attentions and hospitality of this family to travellers are too well known to need comment here; but few are aware that he receives no salary from our government,

being only an agent appointed by the Consul-General residing at Constantinople. Nevertheless, such situations are eagerly sought after by the native merchants of the Levant, from the immunities and privileges they carry with them. The French government has a regular consul residing here, M. Guys, an able antiquary, and, like his brother Henri, at Beirout, very liberal in his communications to strangers.

CHAPTER IV.

Tripoli—The Kadisha, or Holy River—El Myna, or Port of Tripoli—Tomb of Sheik-el-Bedawy—Route along the Coast to Latakia described—The Anzeyrys—Their Religion—Set out for Balbec—Sgarti—Ascent of Mount Libanus—Arab Encampment—Ehden—Convent of Kasheya—Kanobin, the Residence of the Maronite Patriarch—Valley of Kanobin—Bshirrai, the highest inhabited Part of Libanus.

TRIPOLI, Oct. 20.—The word Tripoli (three cities), is supposed to be derived from three several colonies,* which established themselves on this promontory, in three adjacent places, and not in one city; but, subsequently extending themselves by their suburbs, so as almost to join one another, their original names became confounded in that, by which the extant city is still known, with some little corruption, being called by the natives Taràbolos.† The present city is built at the foot of the lowest hills of Libanus,

* From Tyre, Sidon, and Aradus.

† It is called Taràbolos-es-Scham, or Eastern Tripoli, to distinguish it from Tripoli in Barbary, which is called Tarabolos-el-Gharb, or Western Tripoli.

about half an hour's distance from the sea-shore. The river Kadisha (Holy), otherwise called Nahr Abou Ali, flows through it, dividing the town into two unequal parts, of which that to the south is the more considerable. It is enclosed by walls of no great height or strength. Outside these walls, and for some distance into the plain, are extensive gardens, planted with orange, lemon, and mulberry trees.

No sooner has the traveller entered the gates than he is struck with the neatness and elegance which is every where apparent, compared with the other towns on this coast. The houses are all built of stone of a greyish colour, and well constructed both within and without. They are mostly flat-roofed. It is here that the inhabitants, but more particularly the women, retire to in the evening, to enjoy the breezes from the sea,* of which nearly every terrace commands a view. There is no public building deserving of particular notice. The bazaars are extensive and well supplied with merchandise, both foreign and native. Amongst the former we noticed a good deal of hardware, principally English, a branch of trade in these parts, which, if well conducted, seldom fails to enrich the merchant who embarks in it.

The principal article of export is silk, produced

* The wind that prevails on this coast is the westerly, called by the ancient Greeks Ζέφυρος—Zephyrus.

in the neighbouring mountains. It is of a coarse inferior quality, and is either sent away in the raw state, or made up into handkerchiefs and shawls for the Moggrebyns of the coast of Barbary, who come here to fetch it, and give colonial produce, which they procure at Malta, in exchange. The other articles of export are sponges, which are found in the adjacent waters in great quantities; galls, from the Anzeyry mountains; yellow wax of a very fine quality from Libanus; dyer's madder from Homs and Hamah, and a little tobacco. The latter is sent to Egypt, where it is much prized.

Large piles of soap are exposed on every side for sale, and even in shops where the article, elsewhere, would not be sought for; but no doubt the venders have a commission on what they can dispose of. There is a large khan here, where it is manufactured for exportation. It is chiefly sent to the coast of Karamania and Anatolia, as well as the alkali, which is used in its manufacture. The latter is brought from the eastern desert. There are several mosques here, said to have been formerly churches, and it would appear from the Gothic arcades which cover the modern bazaars, that they also formed parts of monasteries and nunneries. Amongst the many relics in this town of the times of the Crusades, I observed crosses carved in relief over the doors of houses, and, in some places, chalices.

The river Kadisha, in its passage through the town, furnishes conduits of water, not only to the streets, but to almost every private dwelling; few houses being without a fountain in the court-yard, and not unfrequently in the sitting or receiving room. It also supplies water to the baths, which are numerous here (as in all places where a Mussulman population predominates), and of a superior kind. It well merits therefore the appellation of "Holy," contributing, as it does so materially, to the health, cleanliness, and agreeableness of the city. The population of Tripoli amounts to about 17,000 souls of whom 3000 only are Christians (Greek Catholics). The Turks are represented to be very fanatical. They are governed by a mutzellim dependant upon the Pasha of Acre.

Oct. 21.—At the gate which leads to the "Marina," there are always boys in attendance, with donkies ready saddled, to transport passengers across the plain. In less than half an hour, we reached El Myna, the name given to the port of Tripoli, where vessels discharge and receive their cargoes. It occupies the extreme angle of the promontory on the north side. The harbour is formed by a line of low rocks, stretching from the point of the Myna into the sea, towards the north. The road does not afford very good anchorage, the bottom being composed of rocks, which rub and wear the ships' cables. The in-

habitants of the port, which is a small town by itself, are chiefly Greek sailors, or shipwrights.

From the walls and foundations of houses lying above it, it is evident that it occupies the site of a more ancient town, perhaps one of the three places from whence the city receives its name. The neighbouring coast is said to abound with excellent shell and sea-fish, particularly in the winter months, when they approach the shore for shelter. In the summer, when they retire into deep water, the native fishermen are too indolent to go far out to sea for the purpose of taking them. There is, therefore, a scarcity, except when a Greek fast stimulates their activity. The Turks are not partial to fish, and yet their mode of dressing it is particularly agreeable. The air of the Myna is moist, but nevertheless, more salubrious than that of Tripoli, for the reasons already assigned. From El Myna to the mouth of the Kadisha, there is a chain of six square insulated towers, at about ten minutes walk from each other, seemingly intended for the defence of the harbour. They stand immediately on the sea, and appear to be of Saracenic workmanship. To each of these towers the natives have given a name. A vast number of columns of gray granite, about fifteen inches in diameter, lie around the towers, and in the sea.

The Kadisha is not navigable even to boats, nor is it fordable at this part. We crossed it

higher up, over a viaduct built upon arches, and serving as a bridge. The water rises at the foot of Lebanon, about eight miles distant; and is conveyed along the sides of the hills by a channel to the north of the river, till it comes within a mile and a half of the city, when it crosses the valley and river on an aqueduct of four arches, one hundred and thirty paces long, and seven or eight feet broad. The latter is called Kontaret-el-Brins, a word seeming to imply a Frank origin, perhaps in allusion to its founder. We continued our promenade for about half an hour, over the road leading northward to Latakia, in order to visit the tomb of Sheikh-el-Bedawy, or rather the Spring, to which it gives its name. The latter is enclosed by a wall, and contains a great quantity of fish of the trout species, which are held sacred by the Turks of Tripoli, and are fed daily by the guardian of the tomb. They seem so accustomed to kind treatment, that the moment a stranger approaches the margin, they flock in shoals towards him, and almost leap out of the water to seize the bread that is tendered to them. No person dares kill any of them. The spring is two miles north of Tripoli.

Here a spacious plain, open to the sea on the west, extends north as far as Tortosa, being bounded on the east by the Anzeyry mountains. The latter chain, a lower branch of the Libanus, is less known than most parts of this celebrated

mountain, being inhabited by a lawless tribe that have never been brought into actual subjection by any of the Pashas, so that the government has been obliged to content itself with a tribute, the levying of which is intrusted to some native chief, who farms it by the year. Concerning the origin of this people there is a great diversity of opinions amongst writers, and an equal mystery hangs over their religion, if they have any; but even this is doubtful.* Like the Druses, they may possibly be a Mahommedan sect, and, like all those who secede from a mother church, they have become again subdivided, till they know not what they are themselves.

Burckhardt mentions this supposed subdivision of the Anzeyrys into sects, calling them Kelbye, Shamsye, and Mokladjye; but adds, "nothing is known of them except the names." The principal reason of this protracted obscurity is, that, like the Druses, few individuals among them become acquainted with the most important and sacred tenets of their faith, generally contenting themselves with the observance of some external practices, whilst the esoteric interpretation of the arcana is possessed by the select few. To return from this digression, the plain I was speaking of above is called Djumi, i. e., "the plain," by way of eminence. It is rendered fertile by a vast number of rivers which traverse it in their way

* See Appendix, No. 11.

from the mountains to the sea. These were formerly crossed by fine stone bridges (most of which are now in ruins), and it is a matter of danger to ford them in the rainy season. The first river, proceeding from hence northwards, is the Nahr-el-Bered, or "Cold River," about three hours from Tripoli: near to it is a khan for travellers. Two hours beyond Nahr-el-Bered is the Nahr Akkar; three quarters of an hour further, the traveller comes to a third stream, called Nahr Abrosh, or "Leper's River;" and about half an hour beyond this, the Nahr-el-Kebir the "Great River," supposed to be the ancient Eleutherus.

Having crosed the Nahr-el-Kebir, in another hour he reaches Ayn-el-Hye, the "Serpent Fountain;" around which are considerable traces of foundations and ruins, with sepulchres, denoting some ancient site, possibly the Enydra of Strabo. A little further on, and about a league from the shore, is the island of Ruad, supposed to be the Arvad, Arpad, or Arphad of Scripture,—the Aradus of the Greeks and Romans, once a powerful maritime republic. It is only partially inhabited. On the eastern side of the island, facing the main land, a situation affording a shelter in bad weather, are the remains of ancient piers running into the sea. This no doubt was the principal port. In an hour beyond Ayn-el-Hye, after crossing the bed of a considerable torrent, the traveller reaches Tortosa, called by the natives Tartous, the ancient

Orthosia, situated on the sea-shore, having a spacious plain extending round about it on its other sides. It was formerly a place of great strength, and there are still some interesting remains of better times.

Quitting Tortosa, in an hour and a half is the Nahr Hussein. Four hours and a half beyond this is an ancient site called Baneas, supposed to be the Balanea of Strabo, and the Valanea of the middle ages. From hence it is four good hours to Jebilee. From Tortosa to the latter place, the tract exhibits ruins of castles and ancient sites. Jebilee, the ancient Gebala, stands close to the sea, surrounded by a vast and fruitful plain, producing chiefly cotton and tobacco. The most considerable antiquity of the place is the remains of a fine Roman theatre. It is five hours from Jebilee to Latakia. The whole tract from hence to the latter place, to judge from the ruins of castles and ancient sites, which are met with, particularly in the interval between Tortosa and Jebilee, was formerly thickly inhabited. It is now nearly deserted, and only partially cultivated, the cultivators being chiefly the Anzeyrys, who inhabit the mountains.

Having brought some provisions in my wallet, instead of returning into the city to dine, I sat down by the side of the fountain, and shared my simple fare with the guardian of the tomb. I had some wine also in a flask, but abstained from

drinking it in his presence, for fear of giving him offence. In the evening I returned to Tripoli.

Oct. 22.—After breakfasting with M. Guys, the French consul, who, with M. Katziflis, shares the pleasure of entertaining all gentlemen travellers, without distinction of nation, I set out for Damascus, intending to take the route over the summits of Libanus, and the plain of Balbec.* I was accompanied by my Maronite guide, and a servant of the same creed. The muleteer and his aid were Mussulmen. The price of hire of the mules, the names of places I was desirous of visiting, and the time to be employed on the road, were all agreed upon in presence of M. Katziflis, and committed to writing. It was further stipulated, that the money should be deposited in the hands of the latter, and only to be paid upon a letter from me, announcing my safe arrival at the place of destination, and my entire satisfaction of the conduct of the muleteers, whilst on the road.*

On quitting Tripoli, instead of passing by the road we came, I ascended the Wady Kadisha, or valley of the river of this name. On the northern side, just where the rivers enter the town, upon the summit of a hill stands the tomb of Abou

* From Tripoli there are three roads to Balbec, which traverse the region of Libanus. One passes to the north of the mountain. The shortest, which is directly to the east of Tripoli, is by way of Kanobin and the cedars, over the summit of the mountain. The third crosses it from Djebail.

† See Appendix, No. 12.

Naszer. Opposite to it, on the south side, stands the citadel or castle already noticed. On the same side of the river, a little higher up, is the celebrated Convent of Dervishes, standing in one of the most agreeable and picturesque situations that can possibly be imagined, and imbosomed amongst trees. At the end of an agreeable ride of two hours and a half along the valley, I arrived at the village of Sgarti, romantically situated at the foot of Libanus.

At the approach of winter, when the snows, rains, and blasts on the heights, render the sojourn of the mountain cheerless and forlorn, the more wealthy inhabitants of the upper country descend with their families into the plain, and Sgarti is the village of their predilection until the return of spring. Soon after quitting it, we commenced ascending the upper range of Libanus. The road which conducted us up its precipitous sides, was rugged in the extreme, being over a rocky bed, and the ascent in consequence was harassing and fatiguing to both man and beast. It had become quite dark, and we were on the point of losing our way, when we perceived some Arab tents at no great distance from the road. The latter were of the colour of the soil, and but for the fires they were lighting, we should not, perhaps, have noticed them. We attempted to approach, but their dogs were upon the alert, and set up barking at a great rate, whilst they kept us at a distance with

their distended jaws. But for the costume, they put me much in mind of the gipsies I had seen in my own country.

Burckhardt, in speaking of a tribe called El Haib, known in these parts, says they have no fixed habitations, are tributary to the Turkish governors, and at peace with the country people, but have the character of a great propensity to thieving. They winter, he adds, when the pasture on the mountain fails, on the coast about Djebail, Tripoli, and Tortosa. These were probably some of the same tribe. It was two hours after dark, when we arrived at Ehden. The road is almost one constant ascent. The Sheikh Boutros (Peter), a Christian, and to whose family the village belongs, was on the point of retiring to rest when we arrived. Nevertheless, he received us with a cordiality and sincerity that was as flattering as it was agreeable. A fresh supply of fagots was thrown upon the dying embers, and a supper, such as could be prepared at so short a notice, was quickly laid before us. It consisted of pilaf with butter, but no meat, yaghourt and some wine of the mountain. With such fare, and his amiable society, I soon forgot the fatigues of the journey.

Ehden, Oct. 23.—It is difficult to imagine a more delightful summer retreat than that of Ehden. The amateurs of shade, fine air, and delicious water (advantages which can only be sufficiently appreciated by a visit to these countries),

could not have selected a more favourable spot throughout the whole range of Libanus. Here are some of the largest walnut-trees I have ever seen; they seem to thrive particularly in this mountainous region. The more wealthy inhabitants of Tripoli and the plain, usually spend the hot summer months at Ehden. The air is so genial, that in cases of intermittent fever, cures have been known to take place upon the mere removal from the town to the mountain; whereas, by remaining below, they are often protracted for months, defying all the powers of medicine.

From an elevation, about ten minutes to the west, there is a delicious prospect down to Tripoli and the Mediterranean. Close by is a Greek chapel. During the whole of this day, visiters have been pouring in from far and near, to pay the *miri* or taxes, for which the Sheikh is accountable to the local government. On such an occasion, they are allowed to eat and drink to their hearts' content, and at the public expense. It did mine good, to see these happy mountaineers enjoying themselves. I had so long been accustomed to scenes of oppression, and despotism exercised in the name of religion, that I could hardly fancy myself any longer in the Turkish dominions, when I saw men talking without reserve, laughing without restraint, and embracing one another as members of a common family.

Oct. 23.—Travellers in visiting the Cedars

usually ascend from Ehden direct. The distance is inconsiderable, being little more than five miles, allowing for the winding of the road, which is very rugged, and passes over hill and dale. It being my intention to visit the convents of Kashheya and Kanobia, which lie in the neighbourhood, I took a more circuitous route. At noon I took leave of the Sheikh and his family, much gratified with the reception I had met with. Although I had been the bearer of a letter of introduction from an inhabitant of Tripoli, it was soon apparent to me, that the kind welcome which greeted my arrival, and subsequent treatment, arose as much from his intercourse with Europeans, as from respect for the party who recommended me to his attention. At a short distance to the north of Ehden, are the sources of the Abou Ali. The waters gush out of the earth with great force, and fall down in cascades into the wady of this name, which is a collateral branch of the valley of Kadisha, opening to the south. Taking the road which runs between the two valleys, in three hours I arrived at the brink of the ravine, in the hollow of which lies the Maronite Convent of St. Anthony, otherwise called Kashheya.

Nothing can be more romantic than the position which these holy anchorites have chosen for their retreat from the busy world. It stands on a narrow strip of land, at the foot of a precipitous height, rocky in the extreme, at the same time

covered with the richest vegetation. A mountain torrent, bounding from rock to rock, passes rapidly before it, and seems, from the violence of its course, and its loudly echoed murmurs, to interdict approach to the curious stranger. The advanced hour of the day, and the apparent difficulty of access, made me hesitate whether I should be satisfied with external appearances, or verify the reports of travellers, by personal experience. The latter finally prevailed. Accordingly, leaving my horse at the edge of the ravine to wait my return, I descended alone by a circuitous path, into the romantic valley of Abou Ali, so called from the torrent which intersects it. I found the convent gates open, and therefore entered, but did not meet with a soul to whom to address myself. After wandering for some minutes along its dark passages, I was about to retire from its solitary abode, when I was attracted by the sound of human voices to what turned out to be the Church. Here I found the whole community, to the number of twenty or thirty, assembled for evening prayer. The service concluded, I introduced myself to one of the monks, who obligingly conducted me over the establishment. There is not much to be seen here. The whole claim of the place, as far as the eye is concerned, lies in its locality; but however picturesque it may be, seen from afar, when closely examined, it is wretched in the extreme, being partly built and partly excavated in the rock.

The church, for instance, is nothing more than an enlarged grot, perhaps the original habitation of some celebrated anchorite. The cells of the monks are small, and so damp, that but for some legend which seems to be attached to the place, it seems wondrous how human creatures could ever have taken up their abode in so unhealthy a situation. I was shown a printing press with Syriac characters. It was interesting on account of its rarity in these barbarous countries, but it was in a sad neglected state, and it grieved me to find that those who superintended it, were not the persons likely to draw from it all the advantages of which it was susceptible. They were no doubt actuated by the best of motives, in obeying what they supposed to be the mandates of their vocation, but it required no extraordinary degree of perception to be convinced, that *they* themselves were drawn from a class of society, very little above those whom they were called spiritually to superintend. The Syriac language is known and spoken by many Maronites; and in this district the greater part of them write Arabic in the Syriac characters. On the left hand, on the approach to the convent, is a large natural grotto, extending a great way under ground. I entered a few paces, when my ears were painfully struck with the cries of persons, issuing from the further extremity, apparently in distress; upon inquiry, I learned that this was the grotto in which mad persons are confined until

cured. But what was the remedy resorted to? Scanty allowance of food, and severe discipline! I have heard it somewhere affirmed that apostates, whom they regard here as madmen, are subject to similar treatment. It is well that missionaries should be aware of this result of their benevolent intentions. The monks, when not engaged in their devotions, are severally employed either in cultivating the land belonging to the convent, or in supplying the few articles which their simple mode of life requires, and which their removal from any town prevents their purchasing. When they die, they are interred in their habits, in a vault above ground. The day must be short with the inhabitants of Kashheya, for none but a meridian sun ever descends into its dark recesses. On arriving at the place I had left my horse, in the plain above, I found the time nearly an hour earlier than I expected. I now directed my course to Kanobin, where I intended to pass the night. It was already dark by the time we arrived at the edge of the deep valley, in which it is situated. Nevertheless, its position was pointed out to us, by a light that appeared at one of the windows of the convent. Here we commenced descending by a precipitous pathway, scarcely practicable for mules, but more particularly when carrying a heavy burden, such as we were troubled with. Accordingly I alighted, and attempted to lead mine by the bridle, but he followed with

reluctance, plainly perceiving that I was a bad conductor. Oftentimes, deceived by the lights, I quitted the regular path, thinking to take a more direct course, but I was as often obliged to return. Had they been extinguished during our descent, we should certainly have lost ourselves, at least for the night.

After an hour's fatiguing descent, I arrived at the convent gates. They were shut, but through the influence of my Maronite companion, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, they were speedily opened to us. Through his mediation also, I was supplied with a hasty supper, and provided with a comfortable bed in one of the cells. My window looked out upon the romantic valley of Kanobin. The valley of Kanobin, in its general outline, resembles no other vale I have ever seen. Its details are common to all mountainous districts; its rocky precipitous sides being abundantly clothed with vegetation, and its concave parts furrowed by winter torrents. But it has charms which no other valley possesses in the same degree, arising principally from its extreme seclusion. It was at first illumined only by the partial light afforded by the stars; but subsequently, when I arose from my couch, from an unaccountable restlessness, the scene which presented itself to my view was picturesque and impressive beyond the powers of description. The moon had risen in the interval, though not

yet seen, and a doubtful light was thrown into the deep and abrupt fissure below. No other habitation but our own caught my eye in its whole extent. The sight was at once melancholy and pleasing, the effect of which, and that of the murmurs of the Kadisha coming softly up to my ear, was to dispose me to a long and deep revery; from which I was only at intervals awoke, by the melodious notes of the solitary nightingale, and by the occasional tolling of the convent bell.

Kanobin, Oct. 24.—This morning I paid my respects to the Maronite Patriarch, whose summer residence is here. At this moment, his Eminence is preparing to return for the winter to the great convent of Bekerke, on the coast of the Kesrouan. He is a middle-aged, good-looking man, of affable manners and genteel deportment, without pride. I accompanied him to the church to mass; it is a structure of a mean appearance, being mostly excavated out of the rock, against which it is built. The whole fabric is supported by a high wall built against the mountain. It was, perhaps, originally a cave or grot, the dwelling of some celebrated recluse, at the period such places were inhabited by men.

On the side walls are hung portraits, badly executed, of some of the Patriarch's predecessors, who are all buried here; and from the ceiling are suspended small cotton bags containing coocoons, with the names of the owners attached to them.

For what purpose they are here I cannot tell, though conjecture would lead one to suppose, that the ignorant peasants of the neighbourhood, intended thereby, to implore the influence of the presiding saint, for a plenteous crop of silk. I understand the convent once possessed a considerable library, but not a vestige of it now remains. A fine spring of water issues from under a rock within the court-yard. After breakfast, during which, I learnt some interesting particulars concerning the Maronite population,* I descended to the river, which flows through the valley below the convent. Viewed from this spot, it appears suspended as it were in the air,—it stands at two-thirds of the way down the hill,—with huge rocks hanging over it, and threatening it with destruction. The valley is the most retired that can be imagined, and one would suppose perfectly free from hostile incursions. Nevertheless, the vexations and insults to which its inhabitants are occasionally exposed from the Metaweli, induced the monks for many years, to abandon this residence altogether.

As there is only one approach to Kanobin, so there is only one way of retiring from it, which is that by which we came. At the end of three-quarters of an hour's fatiguing ascent, we regained the upper plain, which we had crossed the preceding day, and came out upon some fields

* See Appendix, No. 13.

planted with dhourra (Indian corn), it being too cold a soil to grow wheat. The road to Bshirrai, which lies along a gentle acclivity, bears the marks of devastation committed by the melting of the snows at the beginning of the summer. To our right, the view down into the valley from which we had just emerged, was extremely beautiful. Had I been master of my own time, I should willingly have tarried here some days, to ramble about its intricate recesses; but my Mussulman guide, Mustapha, took no interest in a scene, which, at every step, reminded him of the ascendancy of those whom he was accustomed to hate and despise, and so hurried me on.

After two hours' agreeable ride, gradually, but imperceptibly, ascending the mountain, we reached the village of Bshirrai, consisting of about one hundred houses, built on the edge of a rocky descent, and inhabited by Maronitè families, occupied in the silk and dyeing trades, and some few in agricultural pursuits, for we observed both tobacco and cotton growing in the neighbourhood. It was an interesting sight to see this little colony of Christians, thus actively and industriously engaged, at this elevated region, the highest inhabited part of Libanus; whilst the Turks, the inert masters of the plain, where nature had put almost every thing within their reach, were scarcely able to draw out an existence. Equally grateful to my Christian ears was the tolling of

the chapel bells (there are no less than five or six, even in this small hamlet) calling the inhabitants to vespers; a summons I myself was on the point of obeying, when I was informed that at a quarter of an hour north of the village, I should find a convent called Deir Serkis, after St. Sergius, to whom it is dedicated. Thither I directed my steps, and was cordially received at the door by the only inmate of the establishment, a Piedmontese monk of the Carmelite Order. He conducted me to a grassy bank, at the foot of a magnificent walnut-tree, from which there is a commanding view over the valley of Kadisha, down to the plain of Tripoli to the south. Here we supped and passed the night.

CHAPTER V.

The Cedars of Lebanon—Their number and appearance—Ascent to the Summit of Libanus—Extensive Prospect—Retrospective View—Contrasted Scenery on its Eastern Side—The Valley o Balbec, anciently called Cœlo-Syria, or Hollow Syria—Descent to Ainette — Scene with the Muleteer — Desolate Country—Deir-el-Akhmar—Crossing of the Plain—Arrival at Balbec—Detailed Account of its magnificent Ruins.

Oct. 25.—Leaving Bshirrai at sunrise, I commenced ascending the upper range of Mount Libanus. In about an hour and a half, I came out upon a small plateau, a portion of which, to the right of the road, seemed to be under cultivation, though no dwelling was in sight. It was watered by a rivulet of excellent water, which I take to be the source of the Kadisha. To the left, and at about half an hour out of the road, which leads from Bshirrai over the mountain into the valley of Balbec, stands the grove of far-famed Cedars; remarkable, indeed, as well for the size and great age of the trees, as for their being the immediate descendants of those, to which there

is such frequent allusion in Holy Writ. So insulated is the situation, that, but for my guide, I should perhaps have passed them by unnoticed, my anxious eye being directed towards the summit of the "snow-crowned Lebanon;" whereas, they stand in a hollow, as if "ashamed," at the foot of the higher division of the mountain, which here forms a natural amphitheatre, opening to the south. Viewed from the road, they look like a clump of wide-spreading oaks, the remnant of a forest that had escaped the axe; but a nearer approach made me better acquainted with their individual merits.

They appear to be of several generations. Of the oldest there are few, perhaps not more than seven or eight. These "patriarchs of the vegetable world" are distinguished by having four or five trunks, each equal to a large tree, spreading from one base, and growing up together, to the height of ten or twelve feet: higher up, they begin to spread out horizontally. I measured the circumference of one of these with the shawl which I wore round my waist, and the result gave nearly thirty feet. Its boughs spread out for as many yards. Besides these, there are about forty or fifty good-sized, well-looking trees, and a great number of smaller ones, with some small pines amongst them. The branches and foliage of the smaller cedars commence near the ground, and have a greater quantity of fruit than the former. The trunks of the older trees are covered with

the names of travellers and others who have visited the spot, some so far back as the seventeenth century (1640). The bark is cut away to receive these inscriptions, and the tree much disfigured in consequence; but in many instances, where done whilst the tree was younger, it has closed again over the incision.

Upon the whole, I expected to have seen finer specimens of this majestic tree than what presented themselves to my deep-wrought fancy. This disappointment, coupled with that with respect to the position they occupy, proved to me, once more, the advantage of seeing places and things with one's own eyes; for if sometimes the reality falls short of the standard erected by an enthusiastic mind, frequently the traveller is more than repaid for the trouble he has taken. In all cases, if not a careless observer, he returns home with an accurate knowledge of facts, no small satisfaction to himself and his friends. The cedars stand upon an uneven ground, covered with rocks and stones, and form a small wood, about a mile in circumference. They are not found in so large a group in any other part of Lebanon, though young trees are occasionally to be met with. But the paucity of their numbers and their present degradation afford no ground for the sarcasm of the infidel; on the contrary, every thing in their actual appearance is calculated to substantiate the truth, aptness, and precision of

the prophecies concerning them. "The rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them." (Chronicles x. 19.)—"Lebanon is ashamed, and hewn down. The high ones of stature shall be hewn down. Lebanon shall fall mightily." (Isaiah xxxiii. 9, 33, 34.) "Upon the mountains, and in all the valleys his branches are fallen." (Ezek. xxxi. 12, 14.)

They are called by the natives Arz Leban. Whilst my guide was collecting some branches which had been blown down by the wind, to make a fire in the neighbourhood and prepare breakfast, I sat under a venerable cedar, indulging in the agreeable associations connected with this scriptural region, whose images are blended with the earliest pictures of our childhood.

From the Cedars, I returned to the road which passes over the higher summits of Lebanon, which being unusually steep, winds circuitously up its sides, for the convenience of animals laden with heavy burdens. Impatient to arrive at the summit, I clambered up the more precipitous part on foot, and after a laborious ascent of one hour, came out upon a small plateau, not five minutes across. From this elevated station the view is truly magnificent. Looking to the right, I follow with my eye the barren ridge of the Upper Libanus, extending for many miles in a south-west direction, towards the sea. At its base is a mass of verdure, the clump of cedars I

just visited. The lower division of the mountain is a more level country, well wooded and watered, and a great part of it fit for cultivation. The valleys of Kanobin and Abouali appear at my feet, opening to the south towards the plain of Tripoli. In the deep recesses of the irregular mountain foreground, I recognise the several villages and places I visited in the three preceding days of travel. In this happy district, inhabited exclusively by a Christian population, every house had been open to me, and every look bespoke benevolence; and in travelling through it I felt a consciousness of security, from which I was never once disturbed. I shall not soon forget you. Fare ye well.

Quitting this scene with reluctance (by this time the muleteers had arrived at the summit), I advanced a few steps to the north-east, when another extensive prospect presented itself, though less agreeable in its details and the impressions it was calculated to inspire. It lay over the great valley, which separates the Libanus from the Anti-Libanus, and includes the district of the Bekaa and the Belad Balbec, which was more anciently called Cœlo-Syria. The latter chain of mountains, the Anti-Libanus, is called by the inhabitants of these districts Djebel Es Sharke, or the "eastern mountain," in opposition to Djebel El Gharbi, "the western mountain," otherwise called Djebel El Leban, in which appel-

lation is sometimes included the whole mountainous tract from the Mediterranean to the Jordan. On this side, as well as on the other, the higher Libanus may be distinguished from the lower by its comparative nudity; nevertheless, vegetation reaches nearly to their summits. They resemble in form and appearance the Apennines, but more particularly the chain which runs north of Genoa and La Spezzia. The air on this spot is keen, although there is no snow visible from it. It is said to lie in deep recesses, where the sun cannot penetrate, and thawing with the heat of summer to afford supply of water to the rivers and fountains in the valleys below.

We descended by a steep road winding down into the valley of Balbec, occasionally cut up by streams formed of the melting snows, and in about an hour and a half, arrived at the deserted village of Ainette. Here, as the name infers, are several springs, one of which, falling over a rock, forms a pretty cascade. They unite in a wady, which runs parallel with the upper mountain, as far as the Lake Liemoun, two hours to the west, which I had seen in my descent, and was desirous of visiting. On my proposing to go thither, a scene took place between the muleteer and myself, which I shall long remember.

From the moment I left Bshirrai, I had observed that the tone and manner of Mustapha had undergone a change for the worse. Here it

broke out into downright insolence. Though the lake was one of the places comprised in the written list, for some reason unknown to me, he was unwilling to go there. In spite of his opposition, I attempted to follow the road which led to it, when suddenly he ran forward, and seizing the bridle of my horse with one hand, he drew out a pistol from his girdle with the other, and presented it at my breast, threatening, if I persisted, to discharge its contents. He added by way of memento, that he had already killed nine men in the course of his life, and that if I offended him I should make the tenth. Though I had pistols also in my holsters, as he had got the start of me, they became useless. I was therefore obliged to put up with the threat, as well as listen with patience to the violent language that followed it.

At first, I was at a loss to account for such outrageous conduct on his part, but it soon became evident that he was giving way to long stifled resentment. It occurred to me that some words, expressive of discontent, which might have escaped me, whilst in the mountains (without attaching much importance to their meaning), had stung his Mussulman pride. As my Christian attendants, my dragoman and servant, were too intimidated to interfere, I thought it prudent to give up the point in dispute, and continue my route direct to Balbec. At this point, Ainette,

begins a more level country, but still slightly undulated, and dividing the upper from the lower Libanus. It is covered with a forest of low oak trees. Here I gave way to reflections of a painful nature, and which the place and hour (night was coming on) were not calculated to dispel. I was no longer in the dominions of the Emir Beshir, or of any governor who would feel disposed to redress an insult, or injury, if offered. I was completely in the hands of my guides.

At the end of three hours' solitary ride, I reached the village of Deir-el-Akhmar, and two hours after sunset; but instead of a comfortable lodging which every where greeted my arrival in the Christian district, I found the place almost abandoned. A few shepherds had driven their flocks among the ruins for the night, and a little milk was all that I could obtain for my supper, and a bundle of straw was my only bed for the night.

Oct. 26.—Deir-el-Akhmar is situated at the foot of the lower range of Libanus. I left a little before daybreak, and crossing the plain in a north eastern direction, in three hours I arrived at Balbec,* the ancient Heliopolis, or "City of the Sun," similarly situated on the opposite side of the valley. The plain that intervenes is fertile to a degree, but apparently uncultivated and naked of trees. There are no villages within

* See Appendix, No. 14.

sight of the road; and the only object which catches the eye in the long interval, is the single column noticed by Pococke and others, and called by the natives Hamoudiade. On approaching the town on this side, it is partly concealed from view by a plantation of walnut and other trees, the great temple alone appearing through the screen of foliage. At the moment of our arrival, the partial but beautiful remains of the latter edifice were brilliantly illumined by the sun's rays, just rising over the mountains in their rear (the Anti-Libanus), thus enabling us to form some idea of the splendid effect of the whole, when the city, and its gorgeous architectural embellishments were numerous, varied, and entire.

On entering by the western gate, a sad scene of ruin and desolation presented itself on every side, a solitary house or two in each street alone remaining, and even these tenantless, or only momentarily occupied by Arab shepherds and their flocks. After searching about for some time for what was once the Christian quarter, I finally alighted at the house of the Armean (Catholic) Bishop. Though high in ecclesiastical dignity, the income of this prelate is small, being almost wholly derived from the offerings made him by a scanty flock still more impoverished than himself. He was miserably lodged, and miserably attired. I therefore gave directions to my Maronite friend, to avoid putting him to any expense on my

account, without, however, letting it appear that I declined his proffered hospitality.

As soon as I had despatched a hasty meal, accompanied by an Arab boy, to serve me as a guide, I bent my anxious steps towards the great temple, and the buildings connected with it. They stand at the western extremity of the city, and just within the modern walls. Without the ancient peribolus, they had a ditch for defence, from which we may infer that they formed, at some period or other, a part of the fortifications, or rather, took the place of a citadel.* A wall of moderate height, and flanked by square towers at intervals, encompasses the remaining portion of the city. The interior space, but more particularly that within the contour of the temple, is covered with ruins of public and private buildings.

The chief entrance to the grand temple, as it originally stood, consisted of a grand colonnade of the Corinthian order, and a handsome flight of stone steps. This is now walled across, and flanked at its extremities by two square battlemented towers, evidently the work of those who converted the whole edifice into a place of defence, being partly built up with fragments of more ancient buildings, such as cornices, columns, pillars, and other architectural remains. A breach

* These remarkable ruins, the relative position of which are given in a hasty sketch at the end of this volume, are still known to the natives by the appellation of El Kalaat, or "The Castle."

in the screen thus formed, affords at present the only means of ingress. It opens into an hexagonal, or octagonal court, now quite in ruins, so much so, that it is not possible to discover the nature of the buildings which once surrounded it. It measures one hundred and forty-four feet each way, extreme width. From hence we ascended into a second court of a quadrangular form, and of considerable dimensions. All round this grand court which is three hundred and forty-seven feet long, by three hundred and seventeen feet wide, formerly ran arcades, some square of forty-three feet, others semicircular of thirty feet in diameter.

The roofs of these chambers, which were open in the front, and supported by columns, have all fallen in; but the exterior walls from which they sprang still remain, and in sufficient preservation to give the stranger an idea of the immense labour that was bestowed upon their embellishments. A row of blind windows or niches for statues, extends the whole length of these walls, which are ornamented with rich mouldings, and divided by pilasters. There are similar niches in the buttresses between. On the summit of these walls, amidst the interstices of which it is composed, a rich profusion of wild herbs have sprung out, and given a picturesque effect to the whole. I have not heard what was the original destination of these chambers; but if I might hazard an

opinion, I should say, they were perhaps appropriated to academies and lodgings for the priests. The ground in the centre of the court is somewhat more elevated than the rest, and a foundation wall, forming nearly a square, and running parallel with the exterior wall, is still apparent; but whether any temple formerly occupied the site, or that it is merely an accumulation of rubbish, I had not the means of ascertaining.

Beneath the quadrangle, and about a third of the width from the northern wall, there is a vaulted passage seventeen feet wide, dividing the court into two unequal parts, and running south nearly to the centre. There is another smaller one also in ruins. The entrance to these passages is from the hexagonal court already described. Continuing to advance to the westward, we came out upon an esplanade, a parallelogram of two hundred and thirty by one hundred and eighteen feet. This court had arches similar to the other, along its western and northern sides. Its southern one had a row of magnificent columns of the Corinthian order, surmounted by a beautiful architrave cornice, making the whole height about sixty or seventy feet above the epistylia on which they stand. Of this colonnade six only are standing. The remainder lie prostrate around them. The whole of this court being artificially raised above the level of the surrounding country, they form a very conspicuous object amongst the

ruins, and particularly as approached from the westward.

A wall of fifteen feet high, running parallel with them to the south, forms the embankment of this artificial terrace on this side, and divides the upper from another lower court, in which stands a sanctuary, to which the city is mainly indebted for its celebrity. This temple, probably the most ancient of the whole, although the best preserved, is of the Corinthian order, though not of the most classical age of Grecian art. When perfect it was approached through a portico, consisting of a double row of columns; but none of these remain standing. Their component parts lie in confused heaps before the entrance, across which a modern wall has been built, forming, apparently a part of the line of defence alluded to above. The doorway leading into the body of the temple is twenty-five feet high, by twenty-feet broad. The moulding and ornaments around it are carved with infinite richness. The lintel was formed of three stones, keying; but the centre one has descended three or four feet below the others, perhaps in consequence of an earthquake. It had represented on it, in bas relief, an eagle with expanded wings grasping a caduceus in his talons, and holding in his beak the joined ends of two festoons, each of which, at the other end, is held by a figure representing a youth with wings.

On each side of the entrance, there is a square

staircase leading out to the top of the temple; the entire roof, however, has fallen in. The inside of the temple is one hundred and eighteen feet long by sixty-five wide. At the western extremity, at twenty-five feet distance from the wall, there appears to have been an arch or canopy, supported by two beautiful Corinthian columns, with double square Corinthian columns, in the two corners, and flat ones at the ends and sides, forming a sort of partition between the body of the church and the altar. The remainder of the two sides have double three-quarter Corinthian columns, one above the other, with double three-quarter ones in the corners. The columns are six feet apart, with a circular mole at top, below, between each, and above, like the top of a beautiful window. The whole roof has fallen in. The materials of which the temple is constructed are of a compact primitive limestone, resembling marble. Here, in the interior, it is become tinged. The stones are large, and fitted so nicely, that the cement, if any were used, is not perceptible. Around the temple, in the clear, there was a row of beautiful Corinthian columns, forty-five feet high, nineteen feet in circumference, and eight or nine apart, and the same from the wall; the whole surmounted by a beautiful cornice, seven feet high, with the space to the wall covered by a carved ceiling of separate stones, cut with infinite art. Of the columns, there were originally fourteen of

a side, sixteen in the front of the pronaos, and eight in the rear, counting the corner ones of both numbers. Of these nine remain on the north side with the ceiling, and four on the south, with six on the west. Some of the columns have slipped from their pedestals, and recline unbroken against the walls of the temple; the remainder have fallen over into the area below. They were composed of three pieces joined together by a square piece of iron, fitted in sockets in the centre.

A little way from the south-east corner, there is a building, square outside,—the walls are of prodigious thickness,—and entered by a beautiful niche of Saracenic workmanship, with a staircase on one side, leading to the top. Four small rooms have been formed in the angles of this building, so as to leave the remainder in the shape of a Greek cross. It is partially lighted by a circular opening at the top, and by narrow lancet windows at the sides. The roof is arched over, so as to bear ponderous stones, the ruins of some building formerly on its top, and the shape of which one cannot at present trace.

The muezzin had ascended a solitary minaret that has been left standing in this neighbourhood, and was calling the Moslems to the noon-day prayer, when I first became aware of the length of time I had already spent amongst these interesting ruins. On my way home to my lodgings,

where I was expected at this hour, I was conducted to a beautiful little detached temple of a semicircular form, standing about one hundred and fifty yards to the south-east of the angle of the grand building just described. It was originally entered by a flight of steps, but the ground has risen all around to the height of the cornice of the basement. Its door, beautifully cut, faces the great temple, and has a Corinthian column on each side. There were originally six more columns outside, and parallel to the building, with a curve inwards, so as to form a kind of corridor. It appears to have been crowned with a cupola, and to have been twenty-three feet high from the ground. There are arched niches outside, between the columns, for statues; and inside, the same ornament is repeated all round, but here it rather represents a window. The pillars that supported the pediment under the spring of the cupola, have been taken away. Altogether, it it is a *chef-d'œuvre* of the art. It appears to have been violently shaken by an earthquake, and is much injured in consequence, though not irreparably so; but it requires to be restored immediately, for in its present disjointed state, a breath of air seems sufficient to complete its destruction, and yet no steps have been taken to avert such a calamity. Earthquakes are not uncommon in this valley, and in a few years this beautiful monument may perhaps be only spoken

of as a thing that once existed. From some paintings in the interior, it appears at some time or another, to have been used as a Christian place of worship.

In the afternoon, having taken some slight refreshment at the priest's house, and noted down in my journal the foregoing observations, I returned to the ruins with increased pleasure, having by this time acquired a clearer perception of the majesty of the whole, and more leisure to examine each particular object in detail. It is only when inside the great temple, when measuring and contemplating the work in detail, that one is able to feel and appreciate, the grandeur, size, and perfection of this monument of art; not less struck with the beauty of its execution, than with surprise, how such masses of stone could be raised to such a height as the top of the building, but more especially the architrave of the detached columns, and the carved beautiful ceiling of the peristyle. This feeling of wonder and astonishment, which had worked upon my mind throughout the day, was still further augmented, upon being conducted outside the enclosure in which the principal ruins stand, to view three enormous blocks of stone forming part of the wall or peribolus, on the western side towards the plain. They lie consecutively in the same course, and about twenty-five feet above the ground, which is a deep fosse, consequently at too great a height to allow me to

measure them; but on referring to my notes, I find that Maundrell, who had been more successful than myself, had ascertained them "to extend sixty one-yards in length;—one twenty-one; the other two, each twenty yards. In deepness, they were four yards each, and in breadth of the same dimension, as far as the eye can judge." This accurate and truth-loving author, writing in an age when these ruins were little known (1697), and almost afraid to hazard an assertion, that was likely to startle the faith of his readers, thus preambles his relation of these wonderful monoliths, perhaps the largest that were ever sculptured by man. "Here is another curiosity in the place, which a man had need to be well assured of his credit, before he ventures to relate, lest he should be thought to strain the privilege of a traveller too far, etc." This would have been my feeling likewise, had not the confirmation given by successive travellers, of the correctness of the above estimate, rendered my testimony superfluous. The whole of this wall, which supports a terrace, is composed of blocks of very great size, but lying by the side of these monsters, their magnitude is overlooked.

The sun was fast sinking behind Lebanon,—for here hours flew like moments,—and the shadows of the mountain were gradually encroaching on the silent and desert plain, when a sort of consciousness of danger bade me either return into

the enclosure, which is seldom visited by the natives, even by day, or retire to my quarters in the inhabited part of the town. I adopted the former course, the more so, as at that very moment a beautiful moon, so favourable to the contemplation of works of art, was just appearing over the hills to the eastward, and promised to assist me in the project. I was not disappointed. As I entered the grand court, in which are contained the principal ruins, a general silence prevailed throughout; even the shepherd's pipe, which but a few minutes before had caught my ear in the plain, had now ceased to be heard. But it was the silence of death, and of widowed greatness; for here, man once dwelt—here, space, material, and art, were all made subservient to his views of grandeur and magnificence. From hence I directed my steps to the more perfect temple, standing in the area below; but the masses of prostrate columns, and chiselled marbles, which obstructed its entrance, seemed almost to interdict an approach. After slipping and falling repeatedly, I gained the interior. Here my presence occasioned a panic amongst a host of birds, apparently wild pigeons, which had taken up their abode in the temple; and I was not a little startled myself, by the fluttering and bustle that ensued, in consequence of my intrusion.

One-half of the building, which is roofless, lay buried in gloomy shadow; whilst the moonlight

rested with complacency upon the upper story of the remainder, and gave a fanciful embellishment to the elaborate sculptures with which it is adorned. Viewed by day, these beautiful structures, though replete with interest and delight, carry with them a mingled feeling of humiliation and regret: humiliation at the reflection of the transitory greatness of all human conceptions, and regret, that such proud relics of man's genius should be held by a people incapable of appreciating their merits, and consequently heedless of their further and complete destruction: whereas, by the uncertain light which reigns at this hour, the greater part of the deficiences are supplied by fancy, and the mind is irresistibly carried back to the period of its perfect state, when incense burnt on its altars, and these walls resounded with the chaunts of a people, sacrificing to the great luminary which enlightens the world, and sheds its blessing influence on the earth. Emerging from the dark recesses of the sanctuary, my attention was suddenly called to the six noble detached columns, standing upon the upper platform, and shooting high up into the air; the effect of which, at this moment, was heightened to sublimity by the moonbeams reflecting on their shafts, and by the solemn stillness that reigned around them. Seated upon a fallen fragment of this august pile, and rivetted to the spot by a melancholy, yet pleasurable feeling, I remained, I dare not say how long, absorbed in

reflection and emotions ; and which the place, the hour, and the serenity of the night, were all so well calculated to inspire.

At length I reluctantly quitted the site, and returned to my lodgings, where my protracted absence had occasioned no small uneasiness, particularly as it was known in the village, that a stranger (musafir) had arrived amongst them.

CHAPTER XX.

Environs of Balbec—Zahle—Temple at Fursul—Pretended Tomb of Noah—Departure from Balbec—Zebdeni—A repast at the Sheikh's House—Route to Damascus—Remarkable Pass—Souk—Wady Barrada—Approach to Damascus—Kabat-el-Nasr—Magnificent Prospect over the Plain and Town of Damascus—Descent to Salahie—Outrageous conduct of its inhabitants—Narrow Escape of the Author—Arrival at Damascus.

Oct. 27.—Balbec to Damascus.—Previous to my quitting Balbec this morning, which I was forced to do by my Mussulman guide, although my curiosity was far from being satiated, I set out to take a final view of its splendid ruins; at the same time, to make an excursion in its immediate environs, which the absorbing interest of the former had prevented me from doing, the preceding day. Balbec contains about one hundred families, engaged in the culture of the rich land lying about its skirts: they are also owners of a great many cattle. Of these three-fourths are Metaweli,* the remainder Christians. A few years ago

* Mahommedans of the sect of Ali, like the Persians. See Appendix, No. 15.

there was some little industry observed in the place, but earthquakes and civil dissensions have finally sealed its desolation. The Emir lives in a spacious building, called *Serai*, now in ruins. An abundant stream of the most delicious water flows through the town, at present almost *ad libitum*, but formerly confined to a hewn channel.

At the foot of the anti-Libanus, about twenty minutes walk from the town, and to the south of it, is a quarry, where the places are still visible from whence several of the large stones in the boundary wall of the citadel were extracted. One large block is yet remaining cut on three sides, ready to be transported to the site, but as Burckhardt shrewdly observes, it must be done by other hands than those of the Metaweli. It measures sixty-eight feet in length, fourteen in height, and sixteen in breadth. There are other blocks cut in like manner, and standing upright at a little distance from one another. In the plain, towards the Bekan, and at about half an hour's walk from the town, is a small octagonal building, probably a temple, surrounded by eight beautiful granite columns, which are nearly all standing, though the roof has fallen in. It is called by the natives Kubbet Duris.—It had entered into my views to visit Zahle, in my way to Damascus. It lies seven hours from Balbec to the south-east, and is reported to be a large pleasant town, built in an inlet of the mountain (Libanus), on a steep ascent

surrounded by vineyards, and inhabited almost entirely by Christians (Greek Catholics). It belongs to the territory of the Druses. Half an hour from Zahle, on the south side of the village of Kerak, is the pretended Tomb of Noah.

What is shown as such is a tomb-stone about ten feet long, three broad, and two high, plastered all over. Over this is a long structure, measuring nearly sixty feet, the height of Noah, according to Oriental tradition. The Turks visit the grave, and pretend that Noah is really buried there. Two hours from Zahle, and half an hour from the village of Fursul, is the ruined temple, called Hermes Nieha.* However desirous of visiting these places, the muleteer, without assigning any particular reason, opposed my taking this route. I suppose the true motive of his reluctance, was the fear of getting punishment for his tyrannical conduct, Zahle being under the authority of the Emir Beshir, who is known to lean towards Europeans. I was, therefore, obliged to take the more direct road through Zebdeni, consoling myself with the reflection, that I should the sooner get rid of so disagreeable and dangerous a companion.

Just as I was on the point of starting, five or six armed men seized hold of the bridle of my horse, and demanded a caphar of twelve piastres in the name of the Sheikh el-Beled, or governor

* See Appendix, No. 16.

of the district. I claimed an exemption in virtue of my firman, but they disregarded it, excusing themselves by saying, that as it was written in Turkish they did not understand its purport; "Moreover," said they, "you are dressed like a native, therefore you cannot expect to be allowed to assume a double character." This part of the argument had some degree of plausibility in it, and acting thereon, I felt myself forced to yield. My opposition had arisen merely from an unwillingness to establish a precedent prejudicial to future travellers, for indeed, the sum demanded was but trifling. On the other hand, it is not so much the value of the present that makes it sought for, as the compliment due to the party who claims it, the withholding of which is deemed both an injury and an insult. The charge, therefore, of exaction and mercenary conduct bestowed upon Turkish authorities by unreflecting European travellers, is not always justly applicable to the objects of their censure.

The first part of the road from hence to Damascus lies over the western declivities of the Anti-Libanus, which are completely barren, without pasture or trees, and thinly inhabited. Towards Zebdeni the villages are more thickly set, and the hills are covered with vineyards from their bases to their summits. The quantity of grapes produced far exceeds the wants of the inhabitants; and as no wine is made of them, the surplus is converted into a juicy saccharine substance, called

Dibs, and used as a substitute for sugar. The immediate approach to Zebdeni lies through extensive mulberry plantations, enclosed, and having gates (an unusual sight in this country) opening into them.

I was conducted to the Sheikh's house. We found him seated on a raised divan, round the trunk of an immense sycamore, which spread its branches at least twenty yards in every direction. Close by was a running stream, affording freshness and life to the scene. The Sheikh was holding a fine falcon perched upon his fore-finger, and was apparently entertaining a numerous audience upon the subject of hawking, of which species of amusement the Turks are great amateurs. He desired me to sit down by his side, and ordered me an *argile*, or "water pipe," and a cup of coffee. After a few minutes' conversation on the subject of my past and intended travels, I was allowed to retire. I was not sorry to do so; for whilst talking with the Sheikh, I observed Mustapha relating the scene that had passed between us in the plain of Balbec, and some unpleasant epithets from his listeners, applicable to myself, more than once reached my ear.

Zebdeni is a considerable village, lying about half way between Balbec and Damascus, from which respective places it is distant about eight hours. It is likewise a great thoroughfare from the latter place into the mountain (the Anti-Liba-

nus), and *vice versa*. The latter is here called Djebel Zebdeni. From the great concourse of strangers, it has an air of bustle and life, not usually seen in these parts. The inhabitants, three-fourths of whom are Musselmen, the remainder Christians, breed cattle and the silkworm: they have also some dyeing houses. The town is partly built on the high ground, and partly on the low, with large gardens attached to each house, which are plentifully supplied with water from the mountain.

Returning to the Sheikh's house a little before sunset, I found a great number of strangers sitting down to the afternoon meal. It was served, as usual, on a large round table, five feet across, and raised about a foot from the ground. The viands are put into hollow metal dishes, and each one of the guests helps himself in his turn, by dipping in the forefinger and thumb of the right hand—the left is never used on these occasions—and withdrawing a portion, which passes strait to his mouth: a wooden spoon is used to drink up the liquid. I had become inured to this mode of eating, common throughout the East, however disagreeable it might have been at first; and I should have found the ragouts on this occasion excellent, had I been equally well pleased with the company; but it was evident I was not a favourite with the other guests, thanks to Mustapha, who had prejudiced them against me. This

was shown, not only by an absence of all those little "*courtoisies*," which are usually observed towards strangers, but in "*propos*" bordering upon insult. I found it necessary therefore to summon to my aid all the forbearance I was possessed of, both on this occasion, and for the remainder of my journey to Damascus. Like the traveller overtaken by a storm, I sought not to avert what was impossible, but to diminish its effects as much as lay within my power.

Oct. 28.—Zebdeni to Damascus.—On leaving Zebdeni I passed through other plantations of mulberry-trees, and similarly enclosed as those which mark its entrance to the north-east. In about half an hour I arrived at Baroudj; I then came out upon a flat open country, called Ard Zebdeni, three hours in length, and nearly one in breadth. To the west it is bounded by a branch of the Anti-Libanus. It appeared to me quite uncultivated, though the soil is good, and it is watered by the Barrada, and several other streams. There is a descent of half an hour, from this upper plain to a lower valley, called Wady Barrada, from the river which intersects it. The latter, in its fall, forms some very pretty cascades: we crossed it by a bridge called Djissr-el-Souk. At this part, the western extremity of the valley, the mountains approach one another on each side, and form a pass extremely wild and picturesque. On the right-hand side, and in places that seem

perfectly inaccessible, are five or six chambers cut in the scarped face of the rock: they are said to be the work of the Christians, to whom likewise the greater part of the ancient structures in Syria are ascribed. In a quarter of an hour from the bridge, we reached El Souk, a considerable place, with a weekly market or fair. Here the valley widens. In three-quarters of an hour is Husseine; half an hour further, Souk Barrada, with two villages opposite to one another, on either side of the river.

Quitting the Wady Barrada, in an hour and three-quarters we arrived at the village of Djadida, built upon the declivity of a hill. From hence the Barrada winds amongst the wadys, which follow one another in quick succession, formed by the lowest range of the Anti-Libanus; and often losing sight of it, and after crossing it repeatedly, we finally came to the Djissr Dumar, a handsome bridge of two arches. Here we alighted, and halted to refresh. The more than usual concourse of passengers on this road apprized us of our approach to the metropolis. I was every where greeted with the "Selam Aleik," not suspecting I was a Christian; and therefore, not to be noticed, I rejoined it with the "Aleikoum es Selam." The welcome that one Mussulman meets from another in travelling, though they may be perfect strangers to one another, is particularly pleasing; and contrasts singularly with the cold-

ness that would be observed on similar occasions in more civilized countries. From these congratulations I augured well of the disposition of the Damascenes towards strangers, and anticipated a kind reception in consequence.

The sequel will show how ill-grounded were these expectations. From the bridge, leaving the Barrada to the right, the road lies over a rocky, uneven ground, till the traveller reaches the summit of the lowest range of the Anti-Libanus. Not far from where the Barrada breaks out from the mountains, on the crest of a hill overhanging the plain, stands a *kubbé*, or sepulchre of some reputed Mussulman saint. The place is called El Kabat-el-Nasr, or the "Arch of Victory," and is much resorted to on account of its sanctity, the purity of its air, and the magnificent view it affords. Here the vast plain of Damascus, with the city in the foreground, and the suburb of Salahié at our feet, burst suddenly upon our delighted fancy.—It is evening, and the sun that is setting in the west, throws across the plain, a soft, agreeable light, which aided by the diaphanous purity of the atmosphere, enables me, even at this advanced hour of the day, to distinguish objects at the remotest distance. Rigorously speaking, the plain is bounded by a ridge of low hills, lost, however, in the great outline; but, to a person issuing from the mountains, it appears like a sea of land—the commencement of a new

world. The city itself stands about two miles to the east of the mountains, embosomed amidst gardens, and encompassed by the same to a great extent all around.

From amidst this dense mass of verdure, varying in its hues, from the effects of an autumnal sun, mosques and minarets without number, raise their stately heads high up into the air, and vie with the works of nature in gracefulness, form, and symmetry. The busy hum of life, for at this hour the inhabitants have resumed their daily occupations, is distinctly heard even at this distance, and heightens my impatience to find myself within its walls, although unwilling to quit this favoured spot. The river Barrada—the Chrysorrhœa, or "Golden Stream" of the ancient geographers—as soon as it issues from the cleft in the mountains, is immediately divided into three smaller courses. The largest, which is the middle one, runs directly to the city, and is there distributed to the different public fountains, baths, and cisterns, whilst the other two, branching off right and left, contribute mainly to the luxuriant vegetation which adorns the environs. South-east of the city their scattered waters unite again into one channel, and after flowing towards the eastern hills for two or three hours, are finally lost in a marsh which, from hence appears like a small lake. Well may it be called *El Sham Shereef*, the "noble and beautiful," and well may the enthusiastic Arab be

excused when he applies to it the more exaggerated epithet of "Ede" or "Terrestrial Paradise."* It is indeed a rare and lovely sight.

From the Kubbé I descended to the village of Salahié, a beautiful suburb of Damascus, lying at the foot of the western mountains, about a mile from the limits of the city, but connected with it by gardens, orchards, and the villas of the rich.

I was well aware that Damascus was one of the few places remaining in the Turkish dominions, where religious fanaticism drew a strong line of distinction between its Mussulman and Christian population. Many are the humiliations to which the latter are exposed. Here, for instance,—and it was the same, until lately, at Cairo and Jerusalem,—they are not allowed to enter the town on horseback. It was my intention to comply with the interdiction, at the proper places; but, being tired, I deferred the execution of it, until I should reach the gates. My guide and servant, who were Christians, unfortunately betrayed me by alighting. Whilst riding carelessly along, some hundred yards a-head of them, absorbed in my reflections, two or three ruffian-looking Turks ran suddenly up to me, and seizing hold of the bridle of my horse, asked me in an impetuous tone, if I were not a *Djaour* or "Infidel." To avow my faith required no deliberation, but I could not

* See Appendix, No. 17.

help retorting, "*Ana Nazeran, Djaour deyil,*" "I am a Christian, not an Infidel." No sooner had the words escaped my lips than I was torn violently from my horse, and loaded with a volley of imprecations. In a few minutes, some hundreds of the inhabitants had collected around me, and I was apprehensive of becoming the victim of a popular tumult; particularly as my guides, who were better able to explain matters than myself, had become too much alarmed for themselves to interfere in my behalf. I therefore retired to the side of the road, and sitting down on the bank, I endeavoured to disarm the infuriated mob, by the attitude of resignation; for as long as their hostility—which arose from religious* not personal motives—was confined to words, I knew what value to set upon it. But my pacific appearance had a contrary effect. Seeking a pretext for their conduct, some spots of green, the privileged colour, were discovered in my flowered turban, and it was instantly torn off my head. A young urchin—the devil take him—encouraged by this indignity offered to me, walked up and spit upon my

* "It is deeply to be regretted that religion, intended to conciliate mankind, should be the chief cause of their ferocity towards each other, and, should, in an equal proportion, have mingled poison and antidotes. The Mahommedan himself a god, and all the rest of mankind dogs! Can any benefit recompense the pride, the fury, the eternal enmity, destruction, and slaughter envenomed into the soul by such misanthropic dogmas."—(Browne, 400.)

beard! This last affront, for a moment, robbed me of my equanimity, but I immediately recollected, and in time, that the slightest attempt at retaliation would be followed by instant death. Every man had a pistol or dirk in his girdle, and it would have cost him little to draw it out, and act upon the impulse of the moment. After appealing in vain to some Sheikhs, or Elders who were standing by, I got up, and made the best of my way to the gates of the city, followed by a host of boys and women, throwing stones at us as we passed along.

During the whole of this disgraceful scene, which lasted about half an hour, the women, "*horresco referens,*" were even more violent than the men. At one time I thought I should have died the death of St. Stephen at the gates of Damascus. Here the conflict subsided; nevertheless, I had the mortification of being myself obliged to pass along the streets, and through the crowded bazaars, on foot, my dress and person covered with mud and other impurities, whilst the muleteers rode our horses before us, Mustapha wearing my turban on his head. This last part of the "comédie larmoyante," he acted with such consummate insolence, that I joined heartily in the laugh directed against myself, to the no small astonishment of those who were looking on. Except at the Khan, where an European would be exposed to insult, there is no other place to

alight at in Damascus than the Franciscan convent of Terra Santa. It is situated in the Christian quarter. Hither I was conducted by my muleteers; but not finding the accommodations I wished for, or the reception I expected, I took up my abode with a Christian family in the neighbourhood. I soon found out my friend Chesney's quarters.

We passed the evening together, recounting our respective adventures since we had last separated at Beirout. From his account, he had had equally narrow escapes with myself. On one occasion, in wandering amongst the mountains alone, he was overtaken by a party of Metaweli, who, after robbing him of every thing, were in the act of deliberating whether it was not better to shoot him, when his angel guardian, in the shape of an Arab peasant, appearing in sight, they decamped. The reader will have learnt from some of the preceding pages that if great delight is experienced, whilst traversing these beautiful regions, this pleasurable feeling is often alloyed with much personal danger and great vexation of spirit.

Oct. 29.—This morning I waited upon M. Bodin, the sole agent for the European powers (Consuls not having been recognised in Damascus*), and, after relating to him the ill-treatment I had experienced the preceding day at Salahié, requested he would lay the circumstances before

* See Appendix, No. 18.

the Pasha, in order, if possible, to bring some of the offenders in this unprovoked attack to the punishment they deserved. In this proceeding, I was actuated not by rancorous motives, for I had none, but from a feeling of duty in favour of subsequent travellers. M. Bodin, although I had brought no letters to him, assented with an *empressement* which did honour to his feelings. The result was, that Mustapha, as the instigator of the whole affray, received two hundred bastinadoes on the soles of his bare feet, and so well applied, that it is not likely that he will be able to return to Tripoli as he came. He was, moreover, condemned to three month's imprisonment, but this last part of the sentence was, at my subsequent intercession, remitted. The news of a Christian having got redress for an insult offered to him by a Mussulman,—unparalleled in the history of Damascus,—was the subject of general conversation in the bazaars, and I was cautioned not to quit the house, at least for some days. With much reluctance I complied with the injunction, and spent the interval in writing up my journal.

CHAPTER XXI.

Excursion into the Haouran, and Countries to the southward of Damascus—Ancient and Modern Political Divisions of this Country—Preparations for starting—Departure in company with Capt. Chesney, R. A.—El Kessoue—Deir Ali—El Merdjan—El Loehf—Missema, the capital of the Phœnesii—An Arab Encampment—Dress of the Bedouins—Their Domestic Utensils—Shaara—The rocky District called the Ledja—Khabeb—Ezra, the ancient Zaraya.

My friend, Captain Chesney, having proposed to me to accompany him on an excursion into the countries south of Damascus, but more particularly the great plain of the Haouran, the rocky wilderness of the Ledja, and the mountainous district lying east of the Jordan, I gladly availed myself of the opportunity of visiting these interesting regions; well aware that under the guidance of so amiable and intelligent a traveller, I could but find pleasure and instruction. Collectively speaking, they formed the country which was first conquered by the Israelites before the subjugation of the Land of Canaan, and was allotted to the tribe of Reuben, Gad, and the

half-tribe of Manasseh. In the time of the Romans nearly the whole was comprised under the district called Peræa, which was itself divided into the six cantons of Abilene, Trachonitis, Ituræa, Gaulonitis, Batanæa, and Peræa, strictly called; to which some geographers have added Decapolis. Abilene was the most northern of these provinces, being situated between the mountains of Libanus and Anti-Libanus, and deriving its name from the city Abila or Abela.

Trachonitis was bounded by the desert on the east, Batanæa on the west, Ituræa on the south, and the country of Damascus on the north, and included the rocky district now called El Ledja. Ituræa, on the east of Batanæa, and to the south of Trachonitis, derived its name from Ietur, the son of Ishmael, and was also called Auranitis, from the city of Auran, which latter appellation it still retains, under that of Haouran. Gaulonitis was a tract on the east side of the lake of Gennesareth and the river Jordan, which, derived its name from Gaulan, the city of Og, King of Bashan. Batanæa, the ancient kingdom of Bashan, was situated to the north-east of Gaulonitis, and was celebrated for its excellent breed of cattle, its rich pastures, and for its stately oaks. A part of it is now called El Belka. Peræa, in its strictest sense, included the southern part of the country beyond Jordan and Samaria.*

* See Appendix, No. 19.

The whole of these countries are little known to Europeans, having been rarely visited by travellers until the discoveries made by M. Seetzen of the ruins of Djerash (Gerasa), and of Amman (Philadelphia), in the ancient Decapolis. It is true that, in point of historical interest, they are generally inferior to the countries lying west of the Jordan; but on the other hand they stand pre-eminent in the multiplicity and splendour of their ancient remains.

As our absence was likely to be prolonged, particularly if we succeeded in extending our tour to the utmost of our wishes, we spent some days in preparing for our departure. We were indebted to M. Bodin, the French Agent at Damascus, for the choice of a guide, which fell upon one Sheikh Warfa, a Druse. He was a sort of itinerant quack, consequently well acquainted with the countries we purposed visiting. The Greek patriarch of Damascus introduced to us one of his flock, a young man named Constantine, who, besides Arabic, could speak modern Greek, and it was in this last language that our communications were to be conveyed, our knowledge of the former being still very imperfect. The quarter from whence these two individuals came recommended to us, was some guarantee for the safety of our persons.

Travellers, in general, are not sufficiently scrupulous in the choice of the persons who accom-

pany them, and it is only when too late that they become convinced of the consequences of its neglect. These two important points settled, we engaged horses at so much each per day; we paying the keep whilst on the road. The owner did not accompany us himself, but sent a boy to look after them. Hitherto I had worn the long dress, such as is used by the native merchants in the Levant. By the advice of my friends I now laid this aside, and assumed the dress of the people I was about to visit, which is very similar to that worn by the Bedouins, their neighbours, on the desert side. It consists of a white, coarse, cotton stuff, forming the kombaz or gown, and drawers of the same material. Over this is worn the *abba* or cloak, which is of a coarse stuff, striped black and white, and without seams.

The graceful white bernous worn in Barbary and Egypt, is not in use in Palestine. Instead of the red Turkish cap, called *tarbouch*, a white cotton one is worn; and over this a square kerchief (*kefié*) of cotton and silk mixed, generally yellow and green, is folded in a way that one corner falls backward, and two other corners hang over the forepart of the shoulders. With the latter they cover their faces to protect them from the sun's ray's, in hot-wind or rain: it also serves to conceal the features of those who wish to be unknown. The whole is fastened with a rope of camel's hair, called *akal*. The breast and feet are naked.

Shoes (*serbul*) are worn, but no slippers. These several articles we purchased in the bazaars, where we also laid in our supplies, such as several pounds of coffee beans, the same of tobacco, some rice, etc., not omitting to purchase a quantity of trifles to give away as presents, where money could not be offered. I took out of my canteen what was absolutely necessary for cooking a meal in places, where it could not otherwise be procured, such as a soup-dish, half-a dozen plates, and a few cups of Britannia metal. I added to these a coffee-pot, some china cups (*findjans*), and an iron machine used for carrying butter, an essential ingredient in every Bedouin dish. All these we put into a double carpet-bag called *kourdge*. We took with us likewise two fowling pieces, and two brace of pistols. What we left behind, such as heavy baggage, money, etc., we placed under the care of M. Bodin. Through the kindness of this gentleman, we obtained from the governor a *bouyourdi* or general passport to his officers in the Haouran. We had already a firmân from Constantinople, for travelling through the Turkish empire. We also took some letters of introduction, and notes extracted from Burckhardt's excellent work, to prepare us for what we were to see and inquire for; and that no mistake might occur from our mispronunciation of names, we had them annexed in Arabic characters.

Nov. 1.—Thus prepared we started from Da-

mascus, about noon, accompanied with the good wishes of our friends, who were however, unable to conceal their uneasiness as to our welfare, for indeed it was an expedition fraught with some danger. I have before observed that Christians are not allowed to mount their horses in the town. Unwilling, therefore, to expose myself to a second affront, and moreover fearful of meeting an assassin in the person of the muleteer, who had been so severely punished on my account, I stole out of the town on foot, by the southern gate (Bab Allah), the "gate of God," so called from being the one through which the Hadj passes on starting for Mekka.* It leads out to the Meidhan, a field set apart for exercising troops and performing military manœuvres. Here I mounted my horse. Passing through some gardens, in a quarter of an hour we came to the village of El Kadem (the Foot), where Mahomet is said to have stopped without entering Damascus, when coming from Mekka. Opposite to it, and on the other side of the road, stands a mosque with a kiosk, called Kubbet-el-Hadj, where the Pasha

* They proceed in large companies, each having an officer at its head. In the cavalcade the standard of the pseudo-Prophet is displayed. It is of green silk, with passages from the Koran, embroidered in gold, and the camel which bears it is ever after exempt from labour. The Koran itself is also carried with the pilgrims, bound in silk, and borne by a camel richly caparisoned, around which armed Mussulmen are stationed, playing all kinds of instruments.—See Appendix, No. 20.

who conducts the Hadj passes the first night of his journey. Half an hour further is a bridge over a small rivulet. The approach to Damascus on this side is very grand, being formed by a road above one hundred and fifty paces broad, bordered on each side by a grove of olive trees, and continued in a straight line for upwards of three miles. To the left are Zebeine and Zebeinat, on the right Deir raye: these villages are remarkable as having clay cupolas of a conical shape.[1]

After crossing several rivulets, we came to a stony district, called War-ed-Djamous, "the war of the Buffaloes." * Here I was taken suddenly ill. My first impulse was to return to Damascus for the sake of medical advice; but ague coming on, I recognised my old enemy, the intermittent. For this, experience had now enabled me to prescribe for myself; so recollecting that I had come provided with a little sulphate of quinine, I resolved, as soon as the paroxysm of the disease was over, to prosecute my journey; well aware that change of climate in such cases will effect a cure when every thing else fails. Moreover, the air of Damascus is as notoriously bad, in particular seasons, as that of the Desert is proverbially good. Whilst stretched on the ground, and surrounded by my companions, a party of horsemen, armed with lances, gallopped towards us at a furious

* War is the general term for a stony district.

rate. They thought us, no doubt, engaged in some foul act, till they ascertained the nature of our occupations. From their hostile attitude, we had argued ill of their intentions, till we found them to be some of the Pasha's troops stationed here for the protection of travellers. These mistakes are not uncommon even amongst the Bedouins, from the uniformity of dress which prevails throughout the desert.

Having recovered sufficiently to mount my horse, but still supported on either side, I descended into the plain on the east of the War, and in half an hour reached the village of El Kessoue, distant from Damascus three hours and a half, in a S.S.E. direction. It consists of a bazaar, or double line of shops, leading to the river Aawadj, or "the Crooked," over which is a well-paved bridge. Above, is a small castle, commanding the pass. In the neighbourhood is a plantation of what we call the Lombardy poplar; but which, I understand, is a native of Syria. Here the pilgrim caravan passes the second night; and here we passed our first, with no other accommodation than the damp floor of a coffee-house, from which some Turks had just retired to their homes, after smoking the argile, or water pipe; consequently the floor was very wet, and but ill-prepared for sleeping on.

Nov. 2.—As this was a day I was pretty sure of being free from fever, I determined to push

on as far as I could to the eastward, to benefit by a change of air. Accordingly we started from Kessoue an hour before daylight. Leaving the caravan road to Mekka to the right, in about two hours we reached the village of Deir Ali, at the western foot of Djebel Mane. It is now a desert, though there are every where traces of its having been once highly cultivated. The stones that had been taken from the surface are laid in straight parallel lines, at intervals of ten to fifteen paces. There are no hedges, much less trees. Here a valley opens to the south, with a double chain of low hills running parallel with each other: those to the west are called Djebel Khiara; those to the east Djebel Mane, of which this is a part, though they are sometimes comprised under the name of Djebel Kessoue. To the south begins the country of the Haouran. One hour and a half more brought us to El Merdjan, a ruined village, but bearing the traces of having been recently inhabited; the soil about it is fertile, and is watered by several springs. Here we halted to rest our horses. Burckhardt, in a second tour into the Haouran, in the spring of 1812, passed through Merdjan to examine the eastern limits of the Ledja, called the Loehf. At two hours from Merdjan is Berak, bearing it from south-east by east, where there were two saltpetre manufactories, in which the saltpetre is procured by boiling the earth dug up among the ruins of the town.

In one hour from Berak is the Wady Lowa, a winter torrent, which descends from Djebel Haouran, and flows along the borders of Ledja, filling in its course the reservoirs of all the ancient towns situated there: it empties itself into the Bahret-el-Merdj, or marshy ground, at seven or eight hours east of Damascus, where the rivers of Damascus are also lost. Having passed through Essowara, El Hazzem, and Meharetein, in three hours he arrived at El Khelkele. From thence, in the space of four hours to Om Ezzeitoun, he passed through a succession of towns and villages, viz.; Dsakeir, Redheimy, El Hadher, El Laheda, Merazraz, Om, Hareteim, Essamera,—all now in ruins, but proving the once flourishing state of the Ledja.

From Merdjan we rode over a desert plain till we reached, in three hours and a half, Missema, the approach to which is through a labyrinth of rock. This was the capital of the Phænesii, and the *Metrocomia*, or chief place of Trachon. It is situated in the rocky district El Ledja. The ruins are three miles in circumference. The principal one is a small but beautiful temple, in tolerable preservation, in the centre of the town. The approach to it is over a broad, paved area, fifty-two feet deep. A flight of seven steps, the whole length of the façade, leads up to the portico, which consists of six Doric columns, but of which three only are now standing. The entrance to the

temple, now walled up, was through a large door in the centre, with two smaller ones on each side of it: over the latter are niches. The interior roof, which has fallen, and which appears to have been of light materials, was supported by four Corinthian pillars, standing in a square in the centre, and resting upon pedestals with wreaths, and pilasters against the wall to correspond. The length inside is forty-three feet, the width the same; outside fifty feet, and height thirty feet. The centre niche at the northern end, is beautifully turned in the shape of a shell. On either side of the niche is a dark room, and one above it, making the interior a square. There are no springs at Missema, but there are several cisterns.

We wandered over the ruins in search of an inhabitant; but we found the place completely abandoned, though it appeared by the ashes, and dung of sheep which we saw, to be frequented by shepherds in cold weather. According to Burckhardt, "The Arabs of the Djebel Haouran (called the Ahl Djebel), and those of the Ledja, seldom encamp beyond their usual limits; they are kept in more strict dependence on the Pasha than the other tribes: the former tribe are the shepherds of the people of the plains, who intrust them with their flocks during the winter to pasture amongst the rocks and mountains. In spring the Arabs restore the flocks to their proprietors,

receiving for their trouble one-fourth of the lambs and kids, and a like proportion of the butter, made from the milk during the spring months. Those which are to be sold are taken to Damascus."

Afraid to sleep in this deserted spot, we started for Shaara, but were overtaken by nightfall. Fortunately, we were attracted by a light we saw at a distance, to an Arab encampment of three or four tents. We determined to seek hospitality at their hands; for it was much too cold to sleep out, as we had been accustomed to do throughout the summer. Long before we reached the tents the watchful dogs of the Arabs had perceived us, and apprised their masters of our approach by loud barking. We should not have ventured to pass through a flock of sheep that lay in front of the tents, had not one of the inmates come forward to inquire the nature of our visit. Having informed him that we had lost our way, and were benighted, he gave us a welcome to his abode, and conducted us to the tent of the Sheikh, his father, a venerable-looking old man, who was seated, as well as some other Arabs from the neighbouring tents, round a blazing fire, having just finished the evening meal. Not being expected, an additional dish of *burgoul** was prepared for us, as well as bread (*khubz*).

The latter is unleavened, and was baked before

* Wheat boiled with leaven, and then dried in the sun. The dried wheat is preserved for a year, and boiled with butter and oil.

us in round cakes, upon a convex plate of iron, over the embers. The whole was ready in a very few minutes after our arrival. This being our first introduction to Bedouin life, we noticed more particularly many incidents connected with it. The tent the Arab calls his house (*beit*). The covering (*zhaher-el-beit*) consists of pieces of stuff made of black goats' hair, stitched together according to the depth of the tent. Some tents are of goats' hair stuff, white and black. It effectually keeps off the heaviest rain. It is supported by nine poles or posts (*amoud*, or column); three in the middle, and an equal number on each side: these several poles have distinct names. The middle ones are seven feet high; the side ones only five, which obliges the person who enters to stoop a little. The tent is open before, and closed on the sides and back part, to keep out the wind: it is divided into two parts; the men's apartment (*mekaad rabiaa*), and the women's (*mehurrem*), separated by a white woollen carpet, drawn across the tent, and fastened to the three middle posts. In the men's apartment a carpet is sometimes laid on the ground. They recline upon the camels' pack-saddles, the wheat sacks and camel bags being piled up round the middle post.

The women's apartment is the receptacle for the cooking utensils, the butter and water skins, the provisions, and all the lumber of the tent.

We offered our host some coffee beans, which

he accepted; a part he put into an iron ladle, and burnt over the fire in the centre of the tent, taking care to stir them about with a wooden stick. This was pounded in a wooden mortar (*mehabedj*), with an iron bar, and boiled in a metal coffee-pot (*dellet-el-kahwe*), into which was poured the water that had stood over former dregs. Coffee is invariably made by the Bedouins in the presence of the persons to whom it is to be offered—a species of attention on the part of the host towards his guest which is supposed to have originated in the practice of communicating poison in a cup of this liquid. At the sight of this patriarchal group, the lineal descendants of Ishmael, my fancy brought me their great predecessor, the founder of the Israelitish nation, on his way to the Land of Canaan from beyond the Euphrates; and as manners in the East, but particularly in the Desert, undergo but little change, it is not improbable that what I now saw before me, differed but very little, in the whole of its accessories, from the original picture, such as it appeared near four thousand years ago.

Nov. 3.—We quitted the Arab's tent before dawn, and wandered by moonlight over the rocks, till we arrived at Shaara, distant about an hour and a half from Missema. This was once a considerable city. It is built on both sides of a deep wady (valley), half an hour from the cultivated plain, and surrounded by a dreary barren war.

Indeed, the whole Ledja presents a level tract, covered with heaps of black stone, and small, irregularly-shaped rocks, without a single agreeable object for the eye to repose on. Here are several large, but badly-built structures, now in ruins. In the upper town is an ancient edifice, thirty-six feet by forty, with arches resting upon columns ten or twelve feet apart, now converted into a mosque. Over the western door is an Arabic inscription; before it an arched gateway: not far from this is a tower, forty feet high. In many of the houses we found large heaps of saline earth, containing saltpetre, or as it is called in Arabic, *melh baroud*, i. e. gunpowder salt.* Most of the houses in the town are in good preservation. The walls are of hewn stone, which is the black tufa rock, spread over the whole country, and the only species to be met with. The rafters of the roof, which is flat, as well as the doors, are of the same material. The latter are folding, though sometimes of one piece, and are four inches thick, and about four feet high: they turn upon a pivot, worked out of stone above and below, and are fastened within by an iron chain. The streets in Shaara are cut out of the solid rock, the inequalities

* "It is thrown into large wooden vessels perforated with small holes on one side near the bottom. Water is then poured in, which drains through the holes into a lower vessel, from which it is taken and poured into large copper kettles; after boiling for twenty-four hours, it is left in the open air, the sides of the kettles then become covered with crystals."—(Burckhardt, 114.)

being levelled, and the hollow places filled with masonry. The tracks of ancient wheels are everywhere apparent. We did not meet with a single inhabitant, though the place appears to have been only recently abandoned.

At the time Burckhardt visited this place (in 1810), he found here one hundred Druse and Christian families. From hence we continued our route till we reached Khabeb, four hours distant, another considerable village, inhabited for the greater part by Catholic Christians. The Sheikh is a Druse, who knows the country well, and would make a good guide. Whilst on the road, and within an hour of this place, I was again taken ill with fever and ague: I became so helpless, that it was with much difficulty I was supported on my horse to the Sheikh's house.

Nov. 4.—At two hours from Khabeb is Mehadj; in a quarter of an hour more we passed through Keratha or Geratha, close to which is a copious spring, called Raud. It is much frequented by shepherds with their flocks. The water is drawn up by leathern buckets, and poured into stone basins, out of which the camels drink. The well has a broad staircase leading down to it. We stopped a while to water our horses, before feeding them; they are usually fed but once a day on barley, and that at night. About ten pounds weight is their daily allowance. It is put into a bag, called *alyke*, and fastened over their necks.

On arriving at the end of a day's journey, they are walked about a little till they get cool, but never cleaned. In one hour more we arrived at Ezra, where we took up our quarters with the Greek priest who accompanied Burckhardt, and also Seetzen, over some parts of the Haouran. The priesthood here are not distinguished by any particular dress, unless it be the dark-blue turban they generally wear. The inhabitants, who are chiefly *fellahs*, or cultivators, are dressed very like the Bedouins. I was particularly struck with the independent deportment of Christians in the presence of Turks; difference of religion seems in the Haouran to occasion little distinction in the political condition.* Here commences the plain of the Haouran, which is interrupted by numerous insulated hills, on the acclivities or foot of which most of the villages are situated. Of these, Ezra is one of the most considerable, although lying within the precints of the Ledja, having about one hundred and fifty Turkish and Druse families, and about fifty of Christians (Greeks).

EZRA, Nov. 5.—This morning we walked out to see the antiquities of this once flourishing city,

* "When quarrels happen, the Christian fears not to strike the Turk, nor to execrate his religion—a liberty which in every town in Syria would expose the Christian to the penalty of death, or to the payment of a very heavy pecuniary fine. Common sufferings and dangers may have given rise to the toleration which the Christians enjoy from the Turks, and which is further strenghened by the Druses, who show equal respect to both religions."—(Burckhardt.)

the ancient Zarava: it is still one of the principal villages of the Haouran. The ruins occupy an enclosed space, three or four miles in circumference; the most considerable stand to the south-east of the present habitations. We were conducted first to a range of buildings, which to judge from their size and solidity, seem to have been the dwellings of persons of importance. They are known to the Ezra people by the appellation of *Serai*, or Palace. In the midst of the present inhabited part of the town are the remains of another large quadrangular edifice, the roof of which consisted of thirteen rows of arches, five in each, parallel to each other, and of which three now remain. The centre has fallen, roof, columns, and all. It was evidently used as a place for Christian worship. On its western side stands a square tower, apparently of more modern date, probably a belfry. On the south side of the village stands an edifice dedicated to St. George, or El Khouder, as he is called, both by Mahommedans and Christians. It is a square building, measuring ninety feet each way, with a semi-circular projection on the eastern side. The roof is vaulted, and supported by eight square columns, which stand in a circle in the centre of the square, and are united to one another by arches. Before this building is a small paved court, now used as the burial-ground of the Greek priests of Ezra.

The church in which the Greeks celebrate

divine service is a round building, of which the roof has fallen in, and only the outer wall standing. It is dedicated to St. Elias. The ruins at Ezra are considerable, but of little or no interest. In every part of the town, Greek inscriptions are found on stones, lying on the ground, or worked into the walls of houses. They are frequently placed as lintels over the doors, by way of ornament, and sometimes reversed, for the language is perfectly unknown to the modern inhabitants. There are no springs at Ezra, though there are several large cisterns, called here *birkets*. Throughout the whole of the stony district of the Ledja, particularly in the interior, the villages are supplied with water collected in this manner during the winter rains; but as many of these reservoirs necessarily dry up in the summer months, the inhabitants are obliged to remove to some other part of the country, till they are again replenished, and sometimes never to return.*

The outer Ledja, called the Loehf, is distinguished from the inner by being much less rocky, and more fit for pasturage, than the latter. In our approach to this town, we passed several

* The Haouran peasants wander from one village to another; in all of them they find commodious habitations in the ancient houses; a camel transports their family and baggage; and as they are not tied to any particular spot by private landed property, or plantations, and find every where large tracks to cultivate, they feel no repugnance at quitting the place of their birth."—(Burckhardt, 221, 223.)

places where the millstones are made. They are cut horizontally out of the rock, leaving holes of four or five feet in depth, and as many in circumference, and transported to the neighbouring towns to be finished. They are very much esteemed, on account of the hardness of the stone, which is the black tufa rock spread over the whole of the Haouran, and the only species to be met with. I returned to the house at an early hour, anticipating a fit of ague, this being the day. It did not fail to come, and punctual to a minute (nine o'clock), notwithstanding the increased doses of bark which I had taken the preceding day. Although less violent than usual, it detained me in the house the whole of the morning. Chesney, in the meanwhile started on a tour, agreeing to meet me at Shohba. He was accompanied by the priest's uncle, an old man between sixty and seventy, and nearly of the same bad faith as his nephew.—(See Burckhardt, pp. 69 and 84.)

CHAPTER VIII.

Ezra to Shoba—Bousser—Flocks of Birds called Kattas—Sedjen Medjel — Rima-el-Loehf — Ayn Mourdouk—Dhami—Om Ez Zeitoun—Inhabitants of the Haouran — Oppressive Taxes—Dreary Aspect of the Ledja—Abandoned Villages—Mode of constructing Houses—Furniture — Shohba — Saleim— Aatyl— —Kanout—Soueida—Account of the Roman Antiquities in the last-mentioned towns.

Nov. 6.—I left Ezra an hour before day-break, in order to reach Shohba before night, where I was sure of meeting with comfortable quarters, in case my illness should be prolonged. In the course of this long day's journey, I passed through a succession of towns and villages, all built of the black stone peculiar to this country, but devoid of local interest. It will therefore be sufficient to enumerate them as briefly as I noticed them. The singular uniformity of these sombre villages, unenlivened by shops or bazaars within, or trees, gardens, or vegetation of any kind without, impresses the traveller with a species of melancholy it is difficult to describe. We found many of

them without an inhabitant to tell the name to the passing stranger. The cause of this abandonment—and which is observable throughout the Haouran, and frequently in the neighbourhood of cultivated plains—is threefold:—1. The heaviness of the taxes levied on the fedhans.—2. The contributions for feeding soldiers on their march.—3. The tributes paid to the Arabs.

The first of these taxes is called *miri*. Every village is rated in the Pasha's books at the sum, the land belonging to it is capable of producing, whether the number of *fedhans* (yokes of oxen) employed, be great or small. From the moment a portion is taken up, and the village becomes inhabited, the villagers must find amongst themselves the sum inscribed, or what it is rated at in the *cadastre* kept at Damascus!—The expenses of feeding soldiers on their march, and of supplying barley for their horses, are not only very heavy, but extremely vexatious in the mode of exacting it. "I have known the passage of troops looked upon with as much dismay as that of a flight of locusts. On these occasions, the English proverb "save me from my friends," etc., would receive its proper application." *

The third and heaviest contribution paid by the villagers is the *khone* (brotherhood), the tribute claimed from time immemorial by the Bedouins, in return for their protection, or rather forbearance,

* Burckhardt.

in not touching the harvest, or driving off the cattle. Each village pays *khone* to one Sheikh in every tribe, who then acknowledges it as his *ukhta*, or "sister," and is bound to protect the inhabitants against all the members of his own tribe. Lastly, come the *avanias*, or extraordinary contributions, levied at the will of the Pasha, to which there are no limits but his good pleasure, or the impossibility of raising the sum levied. Thus, what with the oppression of the government on one side, and the exactions of the Bedouins on the other, the fellahs or cultivators of the Haouran are reduced to a state little above the wanderers of the desert. "Few individuals," says Burckhardt, from whom I borrow these details, "either amongst the Druses or the Christians, die in the same village in which they were born. Families are constantly moving from one place to another. In the first year of their new settlement, the Sheikh acts with moderation towards them; but his exactions becoming in a few years insupportable, they flee to some other place, where they have heard that they are better treated; they soon find, however, that the same system prevails over the whole country. Sometimes it is not merely the pecuniary extortion, but the personal animosity of the Sheikh, or of some of the head men of the village, that drives a family from their home, for they are always permitted to depart. This continued wandering is the principal reason why no village in

the Haouran has either orchard or fruit trees, or gardens for the growth of vegetables. 'Shall we sow for strangers?'—was the answer of a fellah, to whom I once spoke on the subject, meaning by the word 'strangers,' both the succeeding inhabitants and the Arabs."*

At the end of two hours from Ezra, we passed the village of Bousser, inhabited by Druses. In the War, we noticed a Turkish place of pilgrimage, called Meziar Eliashaa. In this neighbourhood we met, for the first time, large flocks of birds, of a species resembling pigeons; the guides call them *kattas:* they semed to be feeding on the grain which had just been sown, but always rose before I could get within shot of them. They fly in such immense and compact masses that their shadow is reflected on the ground, like that of a cloud passing before the sun.

We passed through Sedjen, built entirely of black stone, and in half an hour came to the spring Mezra. Above the spring is a ruined castle. In one hour E.N.E. is Medjel. Here, on the left side of a vaulted gateway, leading into a room, in which are three receptacles for the dead, are some Greek inscriptions. There are others over the gateway of a church, now a mosque. In three quarters of an hour is Kafer-el-Loehha, situated in the Wady Kanoüat, on the borders of the Ledja, with a church and inscriptions, all copied by

* See Burckhardt, p. 299.

Burckhardt. Forty minutes north is Rima-el-Loehf, with a building eight feet square, twenty high, with a flat roof, and receptacles for the dead.

The other places I passed through were Bereike, a Druse village; Deir-el-Leben (monastery of milk); and lastly, Mourdouk, a village on the declivity of the Djebel Haouran, with a fine spring, whence the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages obtain their daily supply of water. The road from hence for half an hour lies over stony ground. Arrived at Shohba, we entered by the eastern gate, which seems to have been the principal one, the street into which it opens leading in a straight line through the town. I proceeded to the house of a Christian family, where I had been told that Chesney had already arrived. In his excursion yesterday and to-day, he had visited the following places:—Shakkara, Sour, Aazim, places without interest; Dhami, containing about three hundred houses, most of which are still in good preservation: it has no water, but every house has its cistern. There is no arable land in this interior part of the Ledja. The other towns he passed through were Es Jammera, in ruins; and Om Ez Zeitoun. By the extent of the ruins here, it appears to have been formerly a place of some note. He saw a small temple, of which an arch of the interior, and the gate alone remain. Nu-

merous inscriptions are met with at every step on this road. Upon the whole, he confessed himself disappointed at what he saw, and admitted that it was not worth the risk to which one is exposed from the Arab tribes who inhabit the centre of the Ledja.*

SHOHBA, NOV. 7.—This morning I had the satisfaction of finding that I had succeeded in throwing off the fever, although I still felt a struggle for a mastery between the malady and my constitution. This amelioration I attributed partly to the quinine, and partly to the fine air of Djebel Haouran, which I had had the good fortune to reach. I feel conscious that if I had returned to Damascus when first attacked, I should have fallen ere this a victim to its intensity, and am therefore grateful to Providence for the suggestion, by following which I escaped certain death. But alas! how soon these divine interpositions are forgotten, and how little influence they have upon our future life! Though still weak, I was enabled

* "The Ledja, which is from two to three days' journey in length, by one in breadth, is inhabited by several tribes of Arabs, viz.:—Selman, Medledj, Szolout, Dhouhere, and Sial; of these, the Szolout may have about one hundred tents, the Medledj one hundred and twenty, and the others fifty or sixty. They breed a vast number of goats, which easily find pasturage amongst the rocks. A few of them also keep sheep and cows, and cultivate the soil in some parts of the Ledja, where they sow wheat and barley. They possess few horses."—(Burckhardt, 111.)

to walk out, and visit the curiosities of this very interesting place.

Shohba is the seat of the principal Druse Sheikhs. It was formerly one of the chief cities of these districts, as is attested by the remaining town walls, and the magnificent public edifices, which once adorned it. The walls, which are of the usual height (there is no ditch), may be traced all round the city, perfect in many places, and nearly four miles in circumference.

About one hundred paces from the centre of the town, and upon a terrace close to the street leading south, stand five beautiful Corinthian columns (sixty-three feet from out to out, eight feet seven inches in circumference, and nine feet three inches apart), without any appearance of an entablature or cornice, or connection with any other building; though there are remains of one, forty-five feet in the rear, but not parallel. On the other side of the road is a handsome large doorway, and the remains of columns. Facing the west, with a high door on the north (ten feet wide, and twenty feet high), is a square building, forty-one feet each way. Behind this, there appears to have been a court of nearly the same size as the building, and close to its northern corner, an irregular building, consisting of a large curve or niche, in the centre, with branches on each side, inclining to the front, like an irregular half-hexagon. The whole width one hundred feet, and twenty-five

feet high. It is called by the Arabs Beit-el-Serai (a palace*).

To the south of the latter building is the principal curiosity of Shohba, a Theatre in good preservation. It is built on a sloping site, and the semi-circle is enclosed by a wall nearly ten feet in thickness, in which are nine vaulted entrances into the interior. The area is half an ellipsis; short diameter, thirty-six feet, long one, forty-six; that of the whole building seventy. There are ten rows of seats rising nearly from the bottom, twenty-two inches wide by eighteen high. Half way up, there is a level space, five feet wide, to which the entrances lead from the exterior, through a covered gallery twelve feet high. Below this gallery there is another similar one, level with the area of the theatre, into which it has nine vaulted entrances, so that numbers could go in and out without the least inconvenience to one another, and when in the central passage, or "*chemin de rond*," they could, at pleasure, pass to the upper or lower row of seats. The building is twenty-eight feet high, and of cut stone.

A little way to the north-east is the termination of an Aqueduct, which formerly brought water to the town; about five arches still remain standing,

* "I did not venture to enter it, as I had a bad opinion of its present possessor, the chief of Shohba, who some years ago compelled M. Seetzen to turn back from hence towards Soueida."—(Burckhardt, 71.)

and the rest may be traced nearly two miles to the foot of the hill (*Zimhi*), in which is the source which supplied it. The arches are twenty-two feet six inches span, and nine feet three inches wide, the abutments being eight feet by nine feet three inches the other way; the height, thirty-four feet to where the conduit was, now entirely gone.

A few paces from the extremity of the aqueduct were the Baths, an extensive building, with a front fifty-nine feet wide, half a quadrangle. In the rear were two large rooms, the one seventy by thirty; the other sixty by twenty-four; height twenty-seven feet eight inches; both arched with lava mortar, and other light materials, which have fallen in. On the north side were three circular buildings, twenty-nine feet diameter, covered with a dome of the same materials.

One of the great roads from the south passes in the rear of the baths. It is crossed by another at right angles in the centre of the town, and marked by Four Solid Squares or buttresses, seventeen feet each way, seven feet high, and twenty-five apart. There is no appearance of their having ever supported statues, or any other ornament. One of them has been opened, perhaps in search of treasure, from which it appears that they were filled up with rubble.

The great streets leading from hence are paved with cut stone, perfectly level, and beautifully

pointed; they are not placed at right angles with the road, but rather diagonally, as if for strength, and are still very perfect. There are eight Gates, with a similar paved causeway, leading from each into the town. The four great streets lead to gates facing the cardinal points; the latter are treble, one large, with two smaller ones on each side for foot passengers. The houses here, as throughout the Haouran, are built of stone. Each dwelling has a small entrance, leading into a court yard, round which are the apartments. Of these the doors are usually very low, and serve for windows in the day, by being left open. Sometimes there is a small aperture over the door. The interior of the room, which is seldom higher than nine or ten feet, is constructed of large square stones, left bare, and being black, have a very sombre appearance. Across the centre is a single arch, generally between two and three feet in breadth, which supports the roof. This arch springs from very low pilasters on each side of the room, and in some instances immediately from the floor: upon it is laid the roof, consisting of stone slabs, one foot broad, two inches thick, and about half the length of the room; one end resting upon short projecting stones in the walls, and the other upon the top of the arch. The slabs are in general laid close to each other. There is very little furniture to be seen in these houses.

The mode of life, customs, and manners, of the

Turks and Christians who inhabit the Haouran, nearly resemble that of the Arabs, with this difference only, that the former have a more fixed residence, under a house roof, than the Arabs, living under tents, removeable at pleasure. In the dwellings of the poorer classes a matting thrown over the floor, is the only bedding; with the more wealthy, a carpet, but no mattress. They never undress. The culinary articles are confined to a cauldron for boiling the bourgoul and boilers for making coffee. The yearly provision of wheat and barley is kept in reservoirs (*kawara*), five feet high, and two in diameter, formed of clay and cut straw, hardened in the sun. In a country where the tenure of property is so uncertain, shops and bazaars are not to be found; their wants are supplied by an occasional trip to Damascus, or by itinerant merchants of whom we met several on this road. The latter have also large dealings with the Bedouins, from whom they enjoy every protection. They would make excellent guides to an European desirous of visiting the Arab tribes.

Nov. 8.—On quitting Shohba* by the East gate we observed on the side and crest of a hill two circular reservoirs, paved with stone, one hundred feet in diameter.

Descending to Ayn Mourdouk, and following the sloping side of the mountain we came to Saleim, a small village, distant one hour from the

* See Appendix, No. 21.

spring. Here we stopped awhile to admire a small, but formerly, no doubt, a beautiful temple, measuring sixty feet by forty-five outside. It is approached by steps, having a square niche; on the outside of which, were two, or perhaps more, Corinthian columns, with entablature, cornice, etc., corresponding with the beautiful ones all round the building, now almost all fallen; but which appears to have formed a low angle over the side of the walls, with an Etruscan border on part of it.

At the corner of the building inside, were four rows of arches, on which rested the stone roof, which having given way, the cornice and most parts of the top walls, columns, etc., fell in with it. The capitals of the columns, had rather the Egyptian leaf, than the Corinthian. This building, handsome in relief, is called Hour Meraf. There is a reservoir and remains of another temple greatly injured, and some Greek inscriptions. The ruins of Saleim are nearly a mile in circumference, occupying the east side and foot of a hill and are partly inhabited.

From hence, we ascended a rocky hill, partially covered with the stunted oak, a refreshing sight (there being nothing of the kind in the plain) till we reached in one hour and a quarter, the town of Kanouat, situated upon a declivity, on the banks of the deep wady of this name which flows through the midst of the town. The country

about it is comparatively beautiful, and the view very extensive. At the top of the town, southwards, are the chief ruins, probably those of a palace. Here large apartments with columns still remain, the southern one with its entrance by a flight of steps to a beautifully chased door. On the northern side, sixty-seven feet wide, and rather deeper in its front, there was a row of columns about twelve feet from the wall. Of these, there remains but the one at the corner, leaning against a square buttress; on the top was a cornice and Etruscan border.

On the extreme one, there was a projection midway, like those at Shohba. A door near the corner, fourteen feet wide and seventeen from the angle, opens into a colonnade of Corinthian columns, of which eight are standing, eight feet and a half in circumference, and six and a half apart. Parallel to the same front, facing the north, and eight feet in the rear, is the second great apartment, with its front thirty-five feet in the rear of the other seventy-one feet nine inches long, by forty-seven wide. The doors are twelve feet wide, square at the top, and remarkably handsome. Seven feet from the jambs are two columns, and in the same line forming a corridor, at this distance from the wall all round, there is a row of columns, neither Tuscan nor Doric, and surmounted by a plain cornice. They are seven feet

and a half in circumference at the base, and six feet apart.

Immediately behind the apartment and connected with it, there is one of similar dimensions, and with a gallery of similar columns, with arches from the one to the other, abutments running from the east wall to the columns, and a niche twenty-six feet wide in the centre of that side. They were apparently covered inside. Over the apartment there appears to have been two floors of stone, leaning on the arches, but now fallen into the space in the centre. At the S. W. was a gallery ten feet broad, parallel to the end wall, and on both sides east and west, were apartments, now in ruins, with a magnificent paved court, enclosing the latter; the road being paved also with the same finished stone. Nearly south, at about one hundred yards distance, there is a small temple with a beautifully finished door opening north.

There are two Corinthian columns in a line with the jambs supporting the inner portico, three feet wide; and outside of this, four other Corinthian columns (ten feet in circumference, six feet and a half apart, and seven feet and a half from the two inner ones), and surrounded by a handsome cut cornice. The temple is fifty feet wide, and forty-four feet nine inches within, the latter space being covered with fragments of smaller columns

with frieze, etc., either supporting an entire roof, on arches, or a covered gallery round the walls. In front of the temple there is a large and well-paved court, with a cistern underneath, the covering supported by arches.

On the east side, there is a wall of cut stone, about seven feet high, with two square projecting buttresses, but well enough executed to have supported statues or other ornaments.--A little way westward, is part of the town walls, about twelve feet high, straight, perpendicular, and executed in a superior style. About two hundred yards W. by S., there is another temple, formed of two rows of Corinthian columns parallel to each other, the inner, smaller than the outer, and on a raised platform eight feet and a half within the other.

From Kanouat we descended the hill in a westerly direction, until we reached in one hour Aatyl, a small Druse village in the midst of a wood. The ruins here are about one mile in circumference, the buildings ancient, but many still standing, with stone roofs, and inhabited. On the west side, there remains a finely constructed arch, part of a temple of small size, perhaps an oracle. Some fragments of columns, friezes, and Etruscan borders, lie about, within. On a hill south of the town, and clear of it, there is a small temple like that of Saleim with a portico of four columns, ten or twelve feet from the end wall, which terminates at the corner with flat Corinthian

columns; the entrance is square at the top, and beautifully cut all round. The inside we did not examine being inhabited.

From hence, continuing our course in a S.S.E. direction, in half an hour we arrived at Soueida, situated on high ground on the declivity of the Djebel Haouran; the Kelb Haouran, or highest summit of the mountain bearing S.E. from it. To the north, and close to it descends the deep Wady Essoueda, coming from the mountains, where several other wadys unite with it. It is from the numerous wadys which rise in the Djebel Haouran, springs being scarce in the plain, that the population of the Haouran derives its means of existence and the success of its agriculture. It is crossed by a strong well-built bridge, and it turns five or six mills near the village. Soueida is considered as the first Druse town in the Haouran, and is the residence of their chief Sheikh. This title, though hereditary in the family of Hamdan, is not subservient to the laws of primogeniture. On the death of the chief, the individual in his family who is in the highest estimation for wealth, or personal character, succeeds to the title, and is confirmed by the Pasha.*

Nevertheless, it seems that they rather court the protection of the Arabs, than that of the Pasha, inasmuch, as though charged with the defence of the villages, they act upon the "*laisser*

* See Burckhardt, p. 303.

faire" or neutral system, when the latter is at war with any tribe; there being a tacit agreement between them, that their individual property shall be respected. For this treacherous connivance, they are naturally hated by the *fellahs* or cultivators.—It would appear, that this unpatriotic policy, existed in former times also, for we read that in the time of Augustus the government of this country then, called Trachonitis, was transferred from Zenodurus to Herod King of Judea, in consequence of the encouragement shown to the predatory incursions of the Arabs, from the neighbouring desert.

Soueida was formerly one of the largest towns of the surrounding country. The circuit of its ruins, is at least four miles. Amongst them is a street, running in a straight line, for nearly a quarter of a mile, in which the houses on both sides are still standing; the intervening space is very narrow admitting only one person or beast to pass at a time. On both sides is a narrow pavement. In several places are arched open rooms supposed to have been shops. This street commences at the upper end of the town at a large arched gate built across it. Descending, we came to an elegant building opposite a fountain in the shape of a crescent, the whole front of which forms a kind of niche, within which, are three smaller niches. Round the flat roof is a

Greek inscription, which, with the sun in my eyes, I was prevented from copying.

Not far from this is an ancient edifice, one hundred and fifty feet by forty within, with three transverse rows of arches, resting upon irregular columns. It is now a mosque.—At the end of the long street, outside the town, is a tower eighty feet high, and twenty-five square at the base, with windows at the top, two sides of which have fallen down, no doubt the effect of an earthquake.

Near the Sheikh's house at the top of the hill, is a large temple of which eight beautiful Corinthian columns are standing. The entablature and cell also remain entire. On measuring the dimensions of the latter with a line, we found it to be irregular, without any thing in the ground upon which it stands to justify a want of precision. Turning from the beginning of the street to the south is a large building in ruins, called by the natives El Kenisset (the church). It is joined to another building, which has the appearance of having once been a monastery. The church is one hundred and thirty feet long by eighty-nine broad. The grand entrance, with two arched openings on each side, faces the west.

On the north side, in the upper story, are seven windows; at the eastern end is a larger niche, thirty-one feet across, with two smaller

ones on each side. Apparently, there were formerly columns, with the lotus leaf, forming a gallery all around. It is now without a roof. Around the side doors are some beautiful friezes; the crosses over them are effaced, probably done when it became a mosque.—On a hill to the north-west, on the other side of the wady, stands a ruined square stone building, which the natives called Doubeis. It is thirty feet each way, with six half-columns on each side, terminated by a frieze, cornice, etc. The columns are three feet and a half apart, giving a diameter of two feet six inches; the height is twenty-six feet. It is solid within, and the top appears to have terminated in a pyramidical form, where, no doubt, was the place of sepulture. The four corners, not the sides, point east, west, north, and south. On the side to the north-east, near the corner, is a Greek inscription, in handsome characters. There is likewise a Hebrew inscription, which, from my ignorance of the language, I was unable to copy satisfactorily.

CHAPTER IX.

Boszra—Villages of the Djebel Haouran—Soueida to Shemskein along the Loehf—Take an Arab Escort for the South—The Beni Szakhr Tribe—Arms of the Bedouins—Bedouin Mares—Equestrian Evolutions—Draa, the ancient Edrei—A Bivouac—A Repast by Night—River Zerka, the Jabock of Scripture—Arrival at Amman, the ancient Capital of the Ammonites.

Nov. 10.—It was our intention to have proceeded from hence to Boszra, the ancient capital of the province, and the principal town in the Haouran, and where there are some edifices in high preservation ;* but the country about it was represented to be very unsafe. The same objection operated against our penetrating farther into the mountain, the ancient Atsadamum, the eastern skirts of which are said to be studded with innumerable stone-built villages, now in ruins, having been abandoned by the exactions of the Arabs of the Desert, to which it lies contiguous.† The Sheikh absolutely refused to give us an escort,

* See Appendix, No. 22. † See Appendix, No. 23.

saying that, as we had brought letters to him, he should consider himself morally responsible for any accident that might befal us. We allowed ourselves to be dissuaded from it with the more facility, as we were led to expect that we should be able to effect it through the tribe of the Beni Szakhr, a portion of whom were always to be found at Shemskein, their head-quarters in the summer months, as long as they were at peace with the Pasha. For this latter place we set out this morning.

Instead of taking the direct road across the plain, we followed the skirts of the Ledja, called the Loehf, as far as Ezra, passing through Rima, Medjel, and Sedjen. The great plain of the Haouran lay at our feet, to the south, and the eye, owing to its level condition, could nearly embrace it in its whole extent. The soil consists of a fine black earth, of great depth, but apparently, at the present day, very little cultivated. It must have been an agreeable and imposing prospect indeed, to those who looked down upon its rich productions, at the time the whole was brought under culture by the numerous and industrious Roman colonies that once inhabited these territories—its golden crops bending submissively under the breezes that crossed its surface, like the smooth undulations of the wide ocean, and, like it, having no other boundary than the horizon itself.

At Ezra we turned off to the south-west, and

in two hours arrived at Shemskein, one of the principal villages of the Haouran. It is situated on the Hadj road, on some elevated ground, by the side of which flows the Wady Hereir. The Sheikh of Shemskein has the title of Sheikh-el-Haouran, and holds the first rank amongst the village sheikhs of the country; he is in consequence the arbitrator of disputes between the latter and the peasants. In the time of Hadj, he collects from the Haouran and Djolan some hundred camels to accompany the pilgrims to Mekka. His income is very considerable. On arriving here we had considerable difficulty in procuring a night's lodging, the Sheikh pretending that his house was full; the inhabitants (this being the Hadj road), we found equally indisposed against us as Christians. Whilst our guide was searching for night quarters, I suffered severely from exposure to the cold. This being an elevated situation, the wind was very piercing, and I had come but ill provided with the necessary clothing for the night, in case it was necessary to sleep out. At length, from the prospect of a reward, rather than from any compassionate feeling, we were allowed to sleep in a small dark room, through which the cattle passed to go to an inner one, the warmest of the two. Our money likewise procured for us wherewith to make our evening meal.

Nov. 11.—This morning, we descended into the

plain, where the Arab chief was encamped who was to escort us to the south. Our Druse guide, Sheikh Warfa, declined accompanying us in this more perilous part of our excursion; but he offered to make all the arrangements we thought necessary, for accomplishing the object we had in view. The names of all the places we wished to visit were written in Arabic characters. They comprised Djerash, Om-Keis, Amman, and all the interesting ruins as far as Om-El-Reszasz south, and the Jordan to the west. For this, Hatib (that was his name) was to be paid the sum of forty dollars, or six hundred Turkish piastres; an enormous sum for the service, for, as we afterwards found out, they were on the eve of starting for their encampment for the winter, which lies in the skirts of the Desert, to the south-east of Amman. In the above sum was comprised food for ourselves and our horses.

The Beni Szakhr are a tribe of free Arabs. According to Burckhardt, they rove in the plain from the fourth to the fifth station of the Hadj, and thence westward towards the mountains of Belkaa. They are employed by the Pasha (of Damascus) for the defence of the caravan against the other tribes, for which service they receive considerable sums. About two P.M., hearing that our friends were striking their tents, we hastened down into the plain to join them. They formed

a body of about thirty men, all armed with lances, swords, and pistols.

The lances (*ramahl*) are twelve feet long, and made of a sort of bamboo, with an iron or steel pointed head, and at the other end, an iron spike to stick it into the ground. Near the top is a tuft of black ostrich feathers, an emblem of death. They had besides, sabres (*scif*) in a coarse leathern scabbard, these they wear on all occasions. In their girdles some had a curved knife (*sikkin*) and pistols; the latter are foreign to true Bedouin equipment, but are used by those who are in the service of the Pasha. Hatib, the chief, a remarkably handsome young man, was distinguished by a kombaz of silk, and pelisse lined with fur. From his features, it was easy to judge that he was of true Bedouin origin. Like all his brethren of the Desert, he was rather short than tall, well made, but slight; his complexion tawny, with dark eyes, marked with a fire and brilliancy seldom seen in the North, and shaded by a pair of bushy black eyebrows; nose aquiline; hair black; beard short and thin. They have all excellent teeth, which is attributed to the nature of their diet, being confined almost exclusively to farinaceous substances, milk, and butter.

In two hours we arrived at Daal. The Sheikh of this village, the inhabitants of which are fellahs, received us in the *medhafe*, or public reception-

room. Here, as elsewhere, an allowance is made him to pay the expenses attendant upon these and similar visiters, to which all the inhabitants contribute. It would be an affront to offer a return, as a stranger seldom remains more than a night in the same place. At sunset, an immense bowl of *bourgoul* was brought in, and laid upon the floor in one corner of the room. The Beni Szakhr, as many as could at a time, seated themselves round it, making way for others, when they had had a sufficiency.

The Arabs thrust the whole hand, the right (the left remains inactive), into the dish before them, shape the rice into balls as large as hens' eggs, and then swallow it. Their slovenly mode of eating disgusted poor Chesney much, which the Sheikh perceiving, he helped us out a portion into a smaller bowl, and told us we might eat it in our own way. This he did with evident signs of compassion for our fine manners. They wash their hands just before a meal, but seldom after it. Soap is a rare article in the desert.

The disgusting custom of eructation after meals is here universal; it may probably arise from eating so fast, being seldom more than four or five minutes at table. They never talk whilst eating. This over, coffee was served, and smoking and conversation commenced, and lasted about an hour, when each one wrapping himself in his

mashlakh, stretched himself down on a matting to rest. As it was cold, a large fagot fire was kept up during the night, and made in a hollow in the middle of the room, with three or four stones serving for "chenets," or "dogs," for the coffee-pot to rest upon. As there was no chimney, the smoke increased sometimes almost to suffocation. The men frequently got up in the night, to light their pipes, talk, and go to sleep again.

Nov. 12.—Our route this morning lay over the centre of the great plain of Haouran, without a hill or tree to be seen for many miles round. Here the men gratified us with an exhibition of their mode of attack and defence. At a signal given, dividing themselves into two parties, they rode off in opposite directions, leaving Chesney and myself, who were indifferently mounted, at a loss which of the two to follow, not to be left alone. After a while they reappeared, for they had nearly gone out of sight, and approached one another with inconceivable velocity, in doing which, each marked out his man and provoked him to single combat, feigning to strike him with the lance, which he picked up again without leaving the stirrup. In striking, they balance the lance for some time over their heads, and then throw it forward; others hold and shake the lance at the height of the saddle. If hard pressed, they thrust it backwards continually, to prevent the approach of the pur-

suer. These evolutions lasted more than half an hour, and yet the horses returned very little distressed—the men not at all.

In riding, the Bedouin has not the graceful seat of the Osmanli, but it is more secure. They are, indeed, perfect Centaurs. Their horses are mostly small, seldom exceeding fourteen hands. They ride almost exclusively, their mares, having the advantage over the horses in speed and good temper. The latter they sell to the townspeople, or to the fellahs. They object to them, not only because they are more vicious than the mares, but because they neigh, which in an expedition by night, might be the means of betraying them. They are first mounted after the second year, from which time the saddle is seldom taken off their backs. They are kept in the open air during the whole year, never entering the tent, even in the rainy season. In summer, they stand exposed to the mid-day sun. In winter, a sackcloth is thrown over the saddle. Like his master, with very little attention to his health, he is seldom ill. Burning is the most general remedy; and as this is done with a hot iron, it has given rise to the erroneous notion that the Arabs mark their horses.

Arriving at Draa, the ancient Edrei, situated in a deep valley S. W. of Daal, and two hours S. E. of Mezareib, previous to entering the town, we crossed over a very well-built Turkish bridge, of five arches, in perfect preservation. On one side

is a parapet wall, on which is the channel of an aqueduct. Soon after we came to a large *birket* or reservoir, cased with stone, in the hollow of the mountain. It is one hundred and sixty yards by sixty-five, and twenty feet deep, but at this season void of water. Not far from this, are the ruins of a large building, with a cupola of light materials, which the natives called *hammam* (baths).

At the S. extremity of the town is an immense rectangular building, one hundred and thirty feet by ninety-six, with a double covered colonnade all round. In the middle there is a cistern. The columns or shafts used are only one-third their original length, and composed of the Ionic and Corinthian, promiscuously brought together. This no doubt, was originally a Christian church, and subsequently a mosque. In the court there is a fine sarcophagus, with lions' heads in relief. At one of the four corners is a high tower or steeple. Besides these ruins there were others of minor importance, covering a space of two miles and a half in circumference.

Having slept awhile after the noonday's meal, we mounted our horses, and continued our march to the southward. In marching, the Bedouins do not follow one another, or observe any particular order; but when they approach any spot where they anticipate any danger, they advance in a line about ten paces apart from one another, the chief

in the middle. The country now ceased to be inhabited, and we were told to prepare for a rough night. The idea of sleeping out occasioned me no uneasiness, but when I learnt that we should not sup, there being no village near, my courage failed me, particularly as I had neglected to bring away with me any remaining portion of the preceding meal.

At sunset we halted to feed our horses, the corn as usual being put into small bags, and hung round their necks. After resting awhile, we continued our route, which was either level, or over low swelling downs, until about ten o'clock, when we halted to bivouac for the night. The men picqueted their horses in a circle. This was done by passing the foreleg through an iron ring at the end of a long chain, and locking it up, the other end of the chain being secured to an iron spike, driven into the ground. The lance also stands erect by the side of the Arab's rug, ready to be seized at a moment, in case of alarm.

Whilst this was going on, men were sent out to scout over the hills that bordered the narrow valley in which we were to pass the night. The Arab tribes are in a state of almost perpetual warfare against each other. There is no such thing as a general peace amongst them. When made, which is easily done (for their wars are not of long duration), it is as easily broken.

The Arab warfare is that of partisans; general

battles are rarely fought. To surprise the enemy by a sudden attack, and to plunder the camp, are the chief objects of both parties. When attacked by superior numbers, they give way without fighting, but take the first opportunity of retaliating on a weak encampment of their assailants. Not having a cloak, I felt the cold severely, but to diminish its intensity I threw over my body the rug upon which I usually lay. However, in doing so, I found I had only remedied one inconvenience to meet with another. The ground was very stony, and I hurt my sides so much, that it was several hours before I could go to sleep. I had at length become inured to my situation, and had just closed my eyes, when I was aroused by the men around me preparing to start. As our convenience had not been consulted, it became more and more evident that it was not for our sakes alone that the journey had been undertaken.

An hour before sunrise we stopped at an Arab encampment, where we had an opportunity of warming ourselves round a blazing fire of brushwood, collected in the neighbourhood. The reflection of the light thrown upon the swarthy countenances and sparkling eyes of the Bedouins, enveloped in their mantles, and grouped around the fire, was highly picturesque, and would have afforded a fine subject for the pencil, if their well-known prejudices on this score did not interfere to prevent the trial of our skill. We break-

fasted upon *ftita*, which is an unleavened paste of flour and water, baked in ashes of camel's dung, and mixed up with a little butter. We found it very unsavoury, but we were too hungry to decline it.

Nov. 13.—At break of day, the Kalaat-ez-Zerka, one of the stations of the Syrian Hadj (the sixth from Damascus), occupying a commanding situation to our right, suddenly appeared in sight, and shortly afterwards the Nahr-ez-Zerka, the Jabbock of the Scriptures. Its waters first collect to the south of Djebel Haouran. At this point, they enter the Djebel Belka, and after winding through the wadys in a westerly direction, finally empty themselves into the Sheriat-el-Kebir (the Jordan). At this part of its course, it is but a sorry rivulet embedded amongst reeds, but its waters are clear and well tasted.

To the southward of the Zerka commences the country anciently inhabited by the people called Ammonites; a country in those days, as remarkable for its rich productions, as for the number and strength of the cities which covered its surface. It is now one vast desert, having long since ceased to be inhabited by man in a civilized state. Meeting with a flock of sheep, attended by a youth, armed with a short lance, instead of the peaceful shepherd's crook of more tranquil countries, we offered to purchase one, but he declined at any price. The Beni Szakhr were surprised at

the refusal, which they thought unreasonable; so laying hold of one, of their own choice, and at the same time throwing the money down on the ground, they carried it off to a little distance, where it was killed, flayed, and roasted entire. As there was no other fuel near, it was heated and blackened over a fire of camel's dung, and in this half-raw state, cut up in pieces with a sword, and distributed amongst us. Towards noon we came in sight of the ruined city of Amman.

Amman (it is still known by this name), the capital of the Ammonites, was one of the most ancient of the cities recorded in Jewish history. It was likewise called Rabath and Osterath, and subsequently Philadelphia, having been rebuilt by Ptolemy Philadelphus. The principal ruins lie along the banks of a small river, called Moiet (water) Amman, running through a valley bordered on both sides by barren hills of flint. This stream, which has its source in a pond a few hundred paces from the south-west end of the town, after passing under ground several times, empties itself into the river Zerka.

Our attention was first attracted to a large Theatre, excavated in the side of the eastern hill, and opening towards the river. The diameter is one hundred and twenty-eight feet, exclusive of the depth of the theatre itself (eighty-eight feet each way), making it the largest theatre known in Syria. There are forty-two rows of seats (of

stone), fourteen inches high, and twenty broad, divided into three portions by two open galleries. The first division nearest the stage has twelve steps with five cunei, the second fifteen steps with five. There are subterraneous passages in the wings, opening into these galleries of communication. At the top, in the centre of the broad pathway, is a deep square recess with niches on each side.

Before the theatre, and between it and the stream, are the remains of a beautiful colonnade. Eight columns, fifteen feet high, are standing with Corinthian capitals, and entablature entire. There are the shafts of eight other columns. There might have been fifty altogether when entire.—Above the theatre, and south-east of it, are some further remains, which, owing to the impatience of our guides, we were unable to examine with the leisure they required; it is difficult to say, of what they originally formed a part.

Below the great theatre, but more to the south, is another smaller one, perhaps for musical representations. The exterior form of the building is square, though that of the area within, where are the seats, rising from bottom to top, is semicircular, and enclosed by a high wall. It was formerly covered in, but the roof has fallen, and chokes up the interior, so as to render it difficult to determine what might have been its original destination.

Crossing the stream which here appears to have been banked in by a bridge of one arch, and following its left bank, we came to a detached building, in the shape of a half hexagon, facing the west, and overhanging the stream. It has a beautiful arch in the centre, finished "en niche," at the top, and seems to have had wings. There was formerly a row of columns, forming a sort of corridor; this was probably a *stoa* or public walk. —About fifty yards beyond are the remains of a large temple, in a very dilapidated state, and near it a pool of water. Sources of water are seldom met with in the upper plain of Belka, a circumstance which greatly enhances the importance of the situation of Amman, which, however, at the present day, is never visited for any other purpose. Both the source, and the stream it supplies, are plentifully stocked with fish (trout), that seem to live in undisturbed repose. Amongst the other remains of antiquity here is a large Church, perhaps the see of [a Bishop in the time of the Greek emperors,* but subsequently a Mosque, having a steeple like those of the Haouran already described. It is partly built with the materials of more ancient buildings.

On the top of a hill to the west, stands the

* For an account of the churches, convents, bishoprics, &c., which existed in these provinces at the period mentioned above, consult the "Acta Byzantina," *passim*.

Castle of Amman, a very extensive building, enclosed with thick walls, the greater part of which are entire. They consist of huge blocks of stone, resting one upon another without any cement. The interior, which is an oblong square, is filled with the remains of buildings. There are also several cisterns. On the south, is a square building in good preservation, built with large blocks of stone, like those of the walls, without any ornament. The entrance is by a low door. Near this are the remains of a large temple. Shafts of columns, measuring three and a half feet in diameter, with capitals, are lying prostrate in the area.

The space intervening between the river and the western hills is entirely covered with the remains of private buildings—now only used for shelter for camels and sheep; there is not a single inhabitant remaining, thus realizing the prophecy concerning this devoted city.*

In an enclosed space, amongst the ruins, I observed some fresh camel's dung, denoting the recent visit of strangers to the place—perhaps for

* "I will make Rabbah of the Ammonites a stable for camels, and a couching-place for flocks. Behold, I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and deliver thee for a spoil to the heathen; I will cut thee off from the people, and cause thee to perish out of the countries; I will destroy thee. The Ammonites shall not be remembered among the nations. Rabbah (the chief city) of the Ammonites shall be a desolate heap. Ammon shall be a perpetual desolation."—(Ezekiel.)

the sake of water. It did not escape the attention of Hatib and his men, and seemed to occasion them some concern. The Arabs always know by what falls from the camel how many days previously it had been there, even so far back as five or six days. Burckhardt, to whom I freely confess myself indebted for my first information concerning the Bedouins, though subsequently confirmed in most instances by personal observation, relates some curious facts concerning the sagacity of the Arabs in tracing of footsteps, or *athr;* a talent which they seem to possess in common with the free Indians of America, with this difference, that in the American woods the impression is made upon grass, in Arabia upon sand.

The Arab who has applied himself diligently to this study, for it is only to be acquired by long practice, can generally ascertain from inspecting the impression: 1,—Whether the footsteps belong to his own or to some neighbouring tribe, and consequently whether friend or foe has passed: 2,—He knows from the slightness or depth of the impression whether the man who made it carried a load or not: 3,—From the strength or faintness of the trace whether he passed on the same day or one or two days before: and 4,—From a certain regularity of intervals between the steps a Bedouin judges whether the man is fatigued or not, and hence he can calculate the chance of

overtaking him. This faculty of distinguishing footsteps on the ground extends to beasts (horses and camels) as well as men, and in the exercise of it, the same observations will lead to the same results.

The sagacity of the Bedouins in this respect is quite wonderful, and is particularly useful in the pursuit of fugitives, or in searching after cattle. Many secret transactions are brought to light by this "knowledge," and the offender can scarcely hope to escape detection in any clandestine proceeding, as his passage is recorded upon the road in characters that every one of his Arabian neighbours can read.

Returning to nearly opposite the great theatre, to the west side of the river, we came to the remains of a temple, the interior wall of which alone remains, having an entablature of several niches, adorned with sculptures. Before the building stand the shafts of several columns, three feet in diameter. Its date appears to be anterior to that of the other buildings of Amman, and its style of architecture much superior. Whilst endeavouring to decipher an inscription almost effaced,* Hatib, who had been watching me for some time, approached, and seizing my

* The buildings exposed to the atmosphere here are all in decay, being of calcareous stone of moderate hardness; so that, even in a lengthened stay, there is little hope of finding any inscriptions which might illustrate the history of the place.

arm with one hand, and raising the other up to heaven, indicating that there was no other witness but God and ourselves, begged me to tell if I had found a treasure, and if so, it would be a solemn secret between us. Of course he was not satisfied with the answer I gave him, and he evinced his displeasure and impatience in a variety of ways, and finally, by giving the signal to depart.* We slept at the tent-village of Es Souk, the largest we had yet seen.

* "It is a general opinion amongst the people, that inscriptions indicate hidden treasure, and that by reading or copying them, a knowledge is obtained where the treasure lies. I often confuted this opinion with success, by simply asking them, whether, if they chose to hide their money under ground, they would be so imprudent as to inform strangers where it lay? The opinion, however, is too strongly rooted in the minds of many of the country people to yield to argument."—(Burckhardt.)

CHAPTER X.

Route to the South continued—Skirts of the Desert—Arrival at the Encampment of our Escort—Arabian Camels—Bedouin Females—Their Features, Dress, and Occupations—Bedouin Life—Its Charms and its Ennui—Visit to the Ruins of Om-el-Reszasz—Abandoned by our Escort—Madeba, or Medaba—Hesban, or Heshbon—Mount Nebo—The Dead Sea—The Belka Mountains—Arrival at Szalt.

Nov. 14.—On leaving the encampment this morning, we travelled for several hours over an uninhabited plain, in a S.E. direction, till we reached, towards noon, another encampment, where we halted to breakfast. Chesney, in the mean while, crossed the country to the east, to see some ruins called Djezia, three quarters of an hour distant; all he found there was a large *birket*, or reservoir, measuring one hundred and twenty paces in length, by ninety broad. From hence we went out of our road some distance in search of water, which we found in a secluded valley called Rayindé. Here is a cistern, or tank, excavated in the rock, leaving only an aperture for lowering

the buckets. Being in a hollow, it collects all the rain, which falls on the hills which surround it. It seems to be much frequented, for there are paths leading to it from every side: nevertheless the water was foul, and had a disagreeable after-taste, resembling that of bad butter, but I was told not unwholesome. They were anxiously waiting the winter rains to replenish it.

We continued our route for two or three hours eastward, until we finally arrived at the encampment of our chief, situated in a stony valley without water, called El Hamman. The country through which we had passed was slightly undulated, without a tree or shrub, or any traces of cultivation, though by the ashes and dung of former encampments, we saw signs of its having been visited by the wandering tribes, in the summer months, for the sake of the pasturage it affords.*

As we approached the encampment, we fell in with a herd of camels belonging to it, and returning home for the night; the herdsmen singing to encourage the slow and solemn-paced creatures

* "In May, the whole of the Haouran is covered with swarms of wanderers from the Desert, who come for a twofold purpose—water and pasturage during the summer months, and a provision of corn for the winter: they remain till after September. If they are at peace with the Pasha, they encamp generally amongst the villages near the springs or wells; if at war with him, they confine themselves to the district to the south of Boszra, towards Om-e-Djemal and Djedhæins, extending as far as Zerka."—(Burckhardt.)

along. The effect of the camel-driver's song, as heard at this calm hour of the day, the sun just sinking below the horizon, and night about to envelop the plain in darkness, was touching and impressive: and though I could not catch up the words,* the air itself came to my ear, loaded with deep melancholy, and filled me with sadness,—a feeling which at every moment increased, for at every step we took, we drew nearer to the Desert, and wandered further away from the inhabited world.

Throughout the day, a deathlike silence prevails in an Arab encampment; but at sunset, all is life again. At this hour, the fires are lighted for cooking, and from above every tent a thin column of smoke is seen issuing as from a cottage chimney. On every side the shrill voices of the women are heard, either giving directions relating to the meal which is about to commence, or singing to quiet their babes; whilst the watch-dog passes to the rear of his tent, and, as if conscious of the charge intrusted to him, keeps up an incessant barking. This daily scene of bustle and life, was now more than usually enlivened by the return of the owners to their families, after an absence of several months.

* In Hedjaz and in Egypt I have heard the following words, which seemed to be the favourite burden of this (the camel-driver's) song :—"None can perform journeys but the stout and full-grown camel."—(Burckhardt.)

On arriving amongst their tents, which are here placed in a double line, forming as it were a broad street, each one proceeded to his own, sticking his lance into the ground at the entrance; Chesney and myself were conducted to that of the Sheikh. There was happiness depicted on every countenance except our own; the very picture before us brought back to our recollection, our homes, our families, and our friends, from whom we were removed many thousand miles, having just entered the great Desert, lying between Syria and Arabia. If we had not every reason to suspect the good faith of the persons to whom we had intrusted our lives; one circumstance was quite evident throughout the journey, viz., that it was not undertaken on our account.

By computation of time, we had a pretty accurate knowledge of the country through which we passed, and with our small compass we knew the bearings of places where ruins existed: but when we wished to turn off to see them, our faithless guide deceived us by saying they lay in a different direction. All our remonstrances, conveyed through Constantine, were of no avail; an Arab chief could but ill appreciate the passion for seeing stones, and copying inscriptions. The disappointment was severely felt by my friend Chesney, whose researches had they been allowed full scope, (for nothing could exceed his intrepidity) would have been invaluable to the lovers of archæology.

Nov. 15.—This tribe of Beni Szakhr live by the breeding of camels for the use of the pilgrim caravan, of which they have a very considerable number. Though smaller than the Anadolian, Turkman, or Kurdy camels, they are better able to bear heat and thirst than the latter. Those we saw here are chiefly of a light or reddish gray colour, with very little wool about their necks. All the Bedouin camels are marked with a hot iron on the left shoulder or the neck, that they may be recognised if they straggle away or should be stolen. They are driven to pasture in the day, and return to the camp at nightfall, when, without being secured, they recline in the space intervening between the tents. The price of a camel, full-grown at two years, is from three to four hundred piastres, and of a dromedary, one or two hundred more.

The copulating season is in spring, when the males of this species, from being tame and harmless in other seasons, become extremely unruly. The female carries twelve months, and breeds one at a time. The young camels are weaned at the beginning of the second year. Camels are known to attain to the age of forty years; but after twenty-five or thirty his activity begins to fail, and he is no longer able to endure much fatigue. The hair is not shorn from the camel like wool from sheep, but plucked off, about the time it is naturally shed by the animal; and seldom amounts to more

than two pounds. It is woven into stuffs for clothing.

With the Bedouins, the common hour of breakfast is about ten o'clock; that of supper or dinner, at sunset. There is a great sameness in their dishes, being chiefly compositions of flour and butter. Meat is only served on extraordinary occasions, as when a stranger is to be entertained, etc. If an Arab has sufficiency of food, he cares but little about its quality, being a stranger to what we call the pleasures of the table. The women eat in the *meharrem*, what is left of the men's dinners. In the intervals of the repasts, the men do nothing but smoke their pipes, exchange a few words with one another, sleep, yawn, and sleep again.

While they pass away their leisure hours in this idle manner (I am to be understood as speaking of the Bedouin in his tent), the women are often employed in manual work and laborious occupations. The dress of the women is a wide cotton gown of a dark colour—blue, brown, or black, fastened by a leathern girdle. Over their heads they wear a kerchief, called *shauber* or *mekroune*, the young females having it of a red colour, the old, black. All the women puncture their lips and dye them blue; this kind of tattooing they call *bestoum*. Round their wrists they wear glass bracelets of various colours; and silver rings both in the ears and nose. Both in summer and win-

ter they go barefooted. In complexion, the Bedouins I have seen, both men and women are very tawny; their children, however, at their birth and for some time afterwards, are fair, but of a livid whiteness.

Nov. 17.—The halt of yesterday did not surprise us, but our uneasiness became great this morning, when Hatib declared he would not mount his horse unless we gave him more money. Chesney was so disgusted with the cupidity of the Bedouin chief, and his breach of faith, that he took the resolution of escaping from captivity at the first favourable opportunity. He used many arguments to induce me to join him, whilst I endeavoured, by all the eloquence I was possessed of, to dissuade him from the attempt, aware of its impracticability. This opportunity presented itself this very afternoon.

Whilst every body in the tent was asleep, except myself, he mounted his horse, which was picqueted in the rear, and immediately rode off, with no other guide, however to direct him, than his faithful little compass. Half an hour had scarcely elapsed when Hatib awoke. Looking around him, and missing Chesney, he asked me, in an angry tone, where my companion was. I affected not to know. Upon this, he rose up, went out of the tent, and, throwing himself across his mare (they are always ready saddled), and bidding two men to follow him, he galloped off in the direction he

knew but too well my friend must have taken. Being well mounted, he soon overtook him. Nevertheless, Chesney did not surrender immediately; but, with his double-barrelled pistol, kept all three of his pursuers at bay for several minutes. The men had their lances, but no fire-arms. The chief had brought a short musket with him; and seeing that his summonses (which my friend did not understand), were unheeded, he levelled it at him. On this, Chesney capitulated: and after being assailed with a volley of imprecations, and the still more intelligible language of the fists, was conducted back to the tent.

Nov. 18.—We again renewed our application to depart, and it was received with a reiterated demand for money. Ennui now came on with rapid strides. Now that the novelty had worn out,*

* "The Bedouin mode of life may have some charms, even for civilized men; the frankness and uncorrupted manners of the Bedouins most powerfully attract every stranger; and their society in travelling is always pleasant. But after a few days residence in their tents, the novelty subsides, and the total want of occupation, and the monotony of scenery, efface all the first impressions, and render the life of a Bedouin insupportable to any person of an active disposition. I have passed among Bedouins some of the happiest days of my life; but I have likewise passed among them some of the most irksome and tedious, when I impatiently watched the sun's disk piercing through the tent from its rising to its setting; for I knew that in the evening some songs and a dance would relieve me from my draught-playing companions."—(Burckhardt, vol. i. 356.)

we felt all the weariness of Bedouin life, without its occasional excitement. We walked occasionally to the top of the neighbouring hills, but it was all one scene of dull monotony. We were not even allowed the pleasure of riding our horses; so that we envied the lot of the camels we saw going out every morning to pasture, although we knew they were to return in the evening. Hatib was convinced that we had still money with us; but to rob us in his own tent would be a breach of hospitality unheard of in the Desert. Accordingly, under pretence of showing us the ruins of Om-el-Reszasz, which Chesney was so desirous of seeing,* he decoyed us out of it, the better to perpetrate an act, which, in our estimation, stigmatizes the boasted Arab faith.

After the noonday's meal, he desired us to prepare to start,—an invitation we most joyfully obeyed. The road lay over some naked downs, during which we occasionally met with herds of gazelles, but too wild to be approached. The Arabs eat the gazelles when they can kill them. I picked up the quill of a porcupine, which I showed to the men, but as it excited no curiosity, I was led to infer it is an animal not uncommon in these parts. Snakes seem to abound, although there is no wood here: in every direction we saw the skins they had cast off in the summer. In about four hours we reached Om-el-Reszasz (the mother

* See Appendix, No. 24.

of lead). We felt much disappointed at the sight of these ruins, consisting merely of private dwelling-houses, without any remarkable edifice, to repay us for the trouble it had occasioned us. They cover a space of about two miles, enclosed by a low wall. To the north is a large tower. We started several coveys of partridges amongst the ruins: they were so fat that no sooner were they on the wing than they fell again, at the distance of twenty or thirty yards. The Arabs run them down.

In returning to the escort, which consisted of Hatib and four men, the former signified his intention of accompanying us no farther; but added, that in respect to our return to Damascus, he would confide us to one of his men. Startling and unexpected as this notification was to our credulous minds, it was not quite the "*dénouement*" of his infamous treachery. Before parting with us, he made a last effort to get more money from us. He was well aware, that what little we had, was in the possession of Constantine, and therefore did not offer to touch our persons; but he had not the same respect for our guide. In his belt he found a few dollars remaining, at which Constantine fell on his knees, and began in the eastern mode to caress his beard. I chid him in Greek for descending to such humiliation in a mere question of money; which the chief perceived, and mocked the expression of discontent

he could not comprehend. With no other ceremony than wishing us the "*Ma es selam*" ("peace be with you"), he rode off in the direction of his encampment, and was soon out of sight.

Hatib's choice of a guide, unfortunately for us, fell upon the worst man of the whole set, one of the ruffians who had overtaken Chesney in his attempt to escape. He led us to an Arab encampment of five or six tents, pitched in the hollow of a secluded valley, at no great distance from Om-el-Reszasz. Here he told us we were to pass the night, perhaps the last of our lives; for to judge from his sinister looks, he appeared to be one destined to assassinate us, and the place admirably calculated for throwing a mantle over the deed.

On entering the tent, he embraced the Arab who owned it on both cheeks, the usual mode of salutation, and then calling him out, spoke to him in a low voice. This preliminary step was not calculated to allay our apprehensions, nor was the second which immediately followed. Catching his eye, for I was constantly watching his motions, he drew out his sword, and imitated the action of cutting off a man's head, at the same time pointing, with a fiend-like smile on his countenance, to poor Chesney, who sat by my side. At first we were unwilling to eat, for fear of being poisoned; but hunger, and the impression

that such an act was foreign to Bedouin customs, made us alter our resolution, which, under any circumstances, could not long be maintained. We spent a very painful evening, as may be supposed. We thought and talked a great deal of home, and our relative situations were compared. Chesney proposed to make off in the night. I replied that I thought the attempt would be as fruitless as the preceding ones, and would only serve to embarrass our situation. At the same time, I left him at liberty to do what he pleased for his personal safety, and conjured him to act accordingly, hoping he would allow me to extricate myself as I thought best.

Nov. 19.—We had resolved, between ourselves, to keep watch alternately during the night, but it appears we both fell asleep, notwithstanding the painful anticipations of the preceding evening.

On leaving our tents this morning, we directed our course northwards, over a country, hilly, barren, and stony. At noon we stopped at a place called Deleila. At three having crossed a grassy plain for two hours we arrived at Madeba, the Medaba of the Scriptures.* Here is a large cistern, one hundred and thirty yards, by one hundred, and fifteen deep, surrounded by a thick wall, well built, and might still be made available, if cleared of the rubbish, but as Burckhardt well

* Here Joab gained a great victory over the Ammonites and Syrians. (1 Chron. xix. 7—14.)

observes, such an undertaking is far beyond the views of the wandering Arab. The ruins here are about half an hour in circumference, chiefly found on the crest of a round hill, and in the plain below extending westward. Not a single edifice is left standing, though there are some fragments of a temple on the west side, built of large blocks of stone, apparently of high antiquity. From hence we kept the eastern path towards Amman, after which we ascended into the open plain lying westward, and bordered by the hills of Heshbon.

Here our guide Yahia stuck his lance into the ground, and threatened to abandon us, if we did not promise to give him a reward upon arriving at Damascus. Though the mode of exacting it was peculiarly offensive, after the sacrifices we had already made for the protection promised to us by his tribe, I thought the lives of four persons of too much consequence to be lost sight of, and therefore I assented to his proposition without hesitation. He appeared satisfied with my engagement, and we continued our route to Hesban, where we arrived in about two hours from Madeba. Hesban, or Heshbon, was the capital of the kingdom of Sihon, which was given to the tribe of Reuben.

The ruins of a considerable town still exist, covering the sides of an insulated hill, but scarcely a single edifice is left entire. The view from the

summit is very extensive, embracing the ruins of a vast number of cities, standing at short intervals from one another, the names of some of which bear strong resemblance to those mentioned in Scripture, viz.: — Myoun, three-quarters of an hour south-east, probably Baal Meon; El Aal, "the high place," (Eleale?) on a hill, six hours north-east; El Teym, an hour west of Madeba, perhaps the ancient Kerjath Aim.

To the south-west, rises a barren peak, called Djebel Attarous, the Nebo of Scripture, one of the range of Abarim, from the summit of which the great leader and legislator of the Hebrews, after forty years wandering in the Desert, first surveyed the Promised Land; and being favoured with a view of the region, he was not permitted to enter, surrendered his spirit to his Maker. No mortal eye witnessed his death—no human being knew the spot where the venerable prophet was laid. (See Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6.) We passed the night at a tent-village, situated in a winding valley, on the banks of a rivulet called Zerka Mayn, at about two hours west of Hesban.

Nov. 20.—Starting soon after sunrise, and following the valley, which here curves to the north, all at once the northern extremity of the Dead Sea came into view; its western shores bounded by a mountainous range of unusual sterility. Not a town, village, or habitation, met the eye in its whole extent. Indeed, its aspect wore even a

still more savage and inhospitable appearance than when I last had seen it from the plain of Jericho; partly owing to the cloudy state of the atmosphere, which threw an additional gloom over its stagnant waters; and partly to the disposition of fearful excitement produced by long protracted difficulties. We now entered the mountainous district called El Belka, which is a prolongation of Djebel Es Sheikh, and forms the eastern boundary of the Ghor, or valley of the Jordan. It is celebrated for its excellent pasturage.

At the end of two hours, we halted at a tent village (Tusony), where we took one of its inhabitants as a guide through the intricate passes that lead to Szalt, and which are only known to the natives. At noon, continuing our route in a N.E. direction, and crossing several wadys opening towards the Dead Sea, at the end of three hours we halted once more at an Arab encampment, called Ragolomein, our guides being unwilling to proceed any further by day, deeming it safer to travel under the cover of a dark night. This encampment consisted of ten or twelve tents, placed in a circular form. In the centre lay the sheep that had been driven in for the night, our horses were picketed amongst them. The weather being cold, the sheep huddled into our tent, and were walking over us the whole night, making it quite impossible to get any sleep. These ani-

mals have, besides, the disagreeable property of communicating to every thing they approach a species of vermin, the name and qualities of which are but too well known to all travellers in the East.

Nov. 21.—We were awoke this morning, soon after midnight, by the barking of the watch-dogs. Some robbers had evidently been prowling about the encampment, but the darkness of the night favoured their escape. One of our horses was missing. The rope by which he had been fastened to a stake in the ground had been cut, with a view of letting him stray quietly outside the tents, which he did; but it appears the robbers abandoned their prize; for we found him grazing in the neighbourhood. This incident obliged us to defer our departure till daylight.

Having crossed a low hill, which lay to the northward of the encampment, we descended into a secluded valley, the sides of which were covered with grass, and clothed with trees of various kinds, forming an agreeable contrast with the parched plains we had crossed during the ten or twelve preceding days. We were congratulating ourselves upon the prospect of a pleasant day's ride to Szalt, and the speedy termination of our troubles, when we perceived three Arabs skulking amongst the trees upon the embankment to our left, about twenty yards above the road. They were armed with matchlocks, and their countenances bespoke

no good purposes. I expected every moment to hear their muskets discharged at us; but our guide was no doubt recognised as belonging to the formidable tribe of the Beni Szakhr, and we were allowed to pass unmolested. Half an hour further we met with two other Bedouins, similarly posted amongst some rocks and evidently waylaying travellers.

After exchanging the usual salutations, which they did with a very bad grace, we passed on. Our fears were now greatly increased, and we by no means relished this novel mode of running the gauntlet. Our guides likewise became alarmed, and hurried us on as fast as our jaded horses could carry us. On reaching the northern extremity of the ravine, which opened into a small wood of stunted oaks, Yahia, conceiving perhaps, that if we were to be robbed, it were better that he should derive the advantage himself, made a sudden halt, and proceeded once more to search for any money we might have about us.

Poor Constantine was again stripped to his undermost garment, when some gold pieces were found concealed in his belt. On this discovery, Yahia and his Bedouin friend, thought themselves authorized in searching our persons also, and did so. As, during this operation, a pistol was held to my breast, I submitted to the indignity with a good grace, but I was much alarmed for my friend Chesney, who could but ill brook this fresh affront

offered to us, particularly as we had positively declared that Constantine held all we possessed. Emerging from the forest, we suddenly came in sight of Szalt, perched upon a conical hill in the centre of a valley, surrounded by mountains. We had become downcast at the little money that remained to ensure our return amongst our friends; but we recovered our spirits a little on our approach to the only inhabited place we had met with, since we first intrusted ourselves to the Beni Szakhr.

About three hundred Mussulmen and one hundred Christian families are settled here as cultivators; and, what is very unusual, they are living in perfect amity and equality together, each sect having its Sheikh named by themselves, being quite independent of the Pasha. We were aware of this fact previous to our coming here: accordingly, on entering the town, I charged Constantine to tell the first Christian we should meet with, of the disgraceful scene that had taken place on the road. Almost beyond our expectations, it was decided by Mahommedans and Christians, that both parties should appear before their Sheikhs. We repaired to the medhafe, and our story being heard, Yahia was obliged to refund the money he had become so illegally possessed of. He vowed vengeance against me for having denounced him; indeed, I confess it was rather imprudent in me to do so; but it was equally hazardous to confide any longer

in such a faithless guide. Our lives were not safe in his hands. We took up our quarters with a Christian family.

The town of Szalt is situated on the declivity of a hill, or tongue of land, running into a wild and romantic valley, and surrounded on all sides by steep mountains. It is almost the only inhabited place in the province of Belka. They cultivate the ground round their habitations, and live a good part of the year under tents, to watch the harvest and to pasture their cattle. Nevertheless they have some dealings with the Bedouins. The houses are small and flat-roofed, with a door, but rarely a window, the ceiling resting on an arch. They rise in terraces, one above another, on the hill, the crest of which is occupied by a castle, with square flanking projections, walls, thirty feet high, abutments of support in the ditch, and an extensive line of defence, finishing with a high terrace round a court. In the hands of Turks against Turks, it is almost impregnable.

CHAPTER XI.

Set out for Djerash—Mount Gilead—Djezazi—Arrival at Djerash, the ancient Gerasa—Detailed Description of its magnificent Ruins—Necropolis of Djerash—Souf—Souf to Om-Keis—Om-Keis, or Gadara—Account of its existing Remains—Separation from Captain Chesney—Mezareib, or Asteroth—Es Szanamein—Unkind Reception—Khan Danoun—El Kessoue—Return to Damascus.

Nov. 23.—This morning we set out for Djerash, with an escort of twelve men, of whom one half were Mussulmen, and the other half Christians. Mustapha was the name of the chief chosen by themselves. To the former we paid twelve piasters each, to the latter seventy-five. They were all armed with matchlocks.

Our route was kept a secret until the moment of starting. We had given out that we should pass by Yadjoush and Szaffout, as originally intended, there being some interesting ruins in those places; a precaution we thought necessary, as we had every reason to suspect that the Beni Szakhr would

lie in ambush for us somewhere, as we afterwards found out to be the case.

Soon after quitting Szalt, we commenced ascending the elevated ridge of mountains, lying to the north-east of the town, called Djehel Djelaad, the Gilead of the Scriptures. Its direction is east and west, and is about two hours and a half in extent. Our guides conducted us a little out of the way to visit Mezar Osha, the pretended tomb of Neby Osha, or the prophet Hosea, equally revered by Turks and Christians, and to whom the followers of both religions are in the habit of offering prayers and sacrifices.

Like the tomb of Noah in the valley of Cœlo-Syria, it is of prodigious dimensions, between thirty and forty feet long, and three wide; being thus constructed in conformity with the notion of Mussulmen, who imagine that all our forefathers, and especially the prophets before the time of Mohammed, were as remarkable for their size as for their noted longevity. The summit of Djehel Osha overhangs the whole of the Belka. After six hours' march, we reached Djezazi, a small stone-built village, standing on a lower acclivity of the mountain, and alighted at the house of the Sheikh. Not wishing to put these poor peasants to the expense of entertaining so large a body of men, we bought a young kid to put into the pilaf, and spent a pleasant evening on the medhafé.

Nov. 24.—Leaving Djezazi at daybreak, and

crossing a deep valley, through which flows the Zerka, or Jabbock of Scripture, we arrived at the tent-village of Anani, where we alighted, and were served with coffee, and subsequently *ftita*, Continuing our route, we crossed the hill north-east, and proceeding along the western side of the succeeding valley for one hour, the long-wished for Djerash appeared in sight.

At some little distance before we reached the town-walls, we passed under a Triumphal Arch. (eighty-three feet wide and twenty-five feet high), composed of one large arch (seventeen feet) in the centre, and a smaller one (nine feet) on each side, and a square niche above each, finished like a handsome window, resting upon a side projecting pediment. The great arch rests upon two Corinthian columns, on each side of the smaller arches, with a singular ornament of the same order at the base of each, rising above the pedestal. The whole effect is beautiful. Almost adjoining the western side of the arch there is a thick stone wall, running north, and a similar one about fifty yards west of it, approaching each other at the north-east extremity, where they are closed by a building, now in ruins. A wall of five feet high encloses the open space, which is two hundred feet long, and on its top are four or five rows of seats, looking towards the interior. It was probably destined for Naumachian games, and the irregular space a reservoir.

North-east of the arch, and on the side of the western mountain, a little way up its shoulder, are the remains of a fine large Temple, looking north, the sides of which are one hundred feet, and the ends eighty. The walls are eight feet in thickness: the flat surfaces outside are ornamented with breaks and niches, and on the inside there are six pilasters on each facing, and two at each end. In front is a door fifteen feet wide; also one in the south-western corner nine feet wide, and sixteen high. There are no remains of the roof, or any thing to form an opinion of what materials it was composed. The entrance of the temple is remarkably plain, and its chief attraction must have been the superb view from the northern door, looking, as it did, upon a crescent of sixty-three columns, with a street a mile long, bordered with the same. Originally there was a Corinthian peristyle all round the temple, at eight feet distance in the clear. The columns which composed it measured three feet six inches in diameter at the base. There appears to have been a stone roof from the columns to the temple, but no part remains, and only some portion of the columns, with the pedestals of most of them. In front, the colonnade was double, with steps to an approach up the sides of the hill, over which they are fallen, in confused fragments, shafts, capitals, and entablature.

Going out of the temple by the western door, our attention was attracted to a large Theatre, exca-

vated in the side of the hill just within the city walls. The area of the semicircle, the diameter of which is about one hundred and twenty feet, faces the town, so that the spectators seated upon the highest row of benches, in the intervals of the representations, could enjoy at leisure the prospect of all the principal buildings and architectural embellishments for which this city was so eminently distinguished. There are twenty-eight rows of seats, about two feet in breadth and eighteen inches high, divided into two nearly equal parts by a circular gallery, and intersected by narrow passages radiating from the bottom, to facilitate the ingress or egress of the spectators.

About one hundred feet from the front of the temple there is a stone wall, or projection, like a wide flat bastion, and about four feet high. At the same distance to the west, there is another similar wall, with four square pediments, of six or seven feet and about ten high, between them. The second line is close to the diameter of the grand Crescent, which consists of sixty-seven columns of the Ionic order, with a handsome cornice over them. Most of them remain, though broken in several places. The diameter of the crescent is two hundred and thirty feet. In its circumference fifty-eight columns are standing, seven feet four inches in circumference at the base, and seven apart, with their entablature entire.

A Street of Columns opens from the crescent

running E.N.E. Nearly at the distance of two hundred yards from the latter, in which space there are thirteen columns standing, are also three magnificent ones on the west side, rising some feet above the others, with their entablatures, eleven feet in circumference, and nine apart. A little way down the shaft is a stone projection for the cornices of the lower one to rest upon. The east side of the street has few columns standing, but opposite to the high ones on the former side, there are high ones also.

A short distance further up the street are four square pediments, resembling those at Shohba, in the Haouran, but rather smaller; equally marking the centre of the street, and probably also that of the city.

A double row of columns cross the great street at right angles, and pass through the pediments, going in a straight line up the hill westwards, and also eastwards, towards the river, which is crossed by a Bridge of three arches (one large and two small), with two still less for ornament. The bridge is paved on the top diagonally, like the principal streets of Shohba, but rather more substantially.

A short distance further along the stream there is an aqueduct crossing it, a solid flat-looking structure, coming from the eastern hills, and not at all an attractive piece of architecture. It passes by a large pile of buildings in the shape of a cross,

overlooking the river, showing a great many arches, but no columns, or any other object of particular interest. The grand street of columns passes close to this building on the western side, and continues to run along the banks of the river until it reaches the town walls on the northern side.

On the top of the hill N.W. of this building, are the remains of what was probably the Chief Temple of Djerash, the great size and extent of which may still be traced. The cella measures eighty feet by sixty-five, and is quite plain within and without as to the walls. It faced nearly east, and had all round it an outer wall like the Egyptian temples, terminating with a column on that side; before these were two more rows, six in each, making fourteen in all, counting the two columns at the extremity of the eastern wall. They are of the Corinthian order, of the most perfect construction, of brown freestone. Eleven are still standing, with their capitals, but their entablature has fallen. They are about three feet seven inches in diameter, and seven apart. Around the temple, at some little distance in front, as well as on both sides, running up the mountain, and forming a parallelogram, there was a continued row of smaller columns of the same order, but only portions of their shafts remain. In general very few of the capitals now exist of this once magnificent range, which, judging from the bases we were able to trace, contained no less than one hundred and

eighty-six columns in its original state. Burckhardt, speaking of this monument, pronounces it to be superior in taste and magnificence to every public building of the kind in Syria, the Temple of the Sun at Palmyra excepted.

On the south-west side, rather in front of the main building, between it and the cross street of columns, going up the western hill, are the remains of two small temples, or perhaps ornaments, on approaching the temple itself on that side. But at present, nothing but the foundations and bases of the columns exist.

The view over the ruins of Djerash, from the portico of this temple, or rather from the summit, to which there is access by the wall which surrounds it, is particularly fine. Whilst sitting here, and contemplating the surrounding desolation—the effect of which was heightened by the circumstance that not a single inhabitant remained in the town—I descried four or five mounted Bedouins, enveloped in their abbas, stealing gently down the eastern hills towards us. I immediately apprized our escort of the fact, and desired them to stand up on the ruins, in order to make a show of strength in case of a meditated attack. This manœuvre seemed to have had the desired effect, for after looking at us awhile, from the opposite bank of the river, they retired; evidently disappointed at the check they had received.

Nearly in a line with the front of the temple, about one hundred yards to the northward, there

is another Theatre rather smaller than the first, with respect to the number of spectators it was calculated to contain, but considerably wider; its extreme diameter being about one hundred and forty feet. It appears also that it was destined for purposes different from the one already described, the area below the seats being more extensive, and furnished with a suite of dark, arched chambers opening into it. The latter were probably used to confine the wild beasts, destined to combat in the arena, such exhibitions being in vogue, at the time Gerasa, one of the principal cities of the Decapolis, may be supposed to have flourished. There are sixteen rows of seats, with a gallery of communication intervening between the tenth and eleventh, counting from the top, in which space there is a tier of six boxes, with a niche between every second one. Parallel to the diameter of the theatre, also enclosed by a wall, there is a double line of Corinthian columns, which appears to have extended both west and east. They are of exquisite proportions.

The town was nearly square, each side something less than a mile, the walls crossing the river in two places at right angles, the other two sides being parallel to each other, on opposite sides of the hill. The greater part of the enclosed space is covered with the ruins of houses, forming a deep contrast with the elegant specimens of art, whichever way the eye is turned. From the triumphal arch on the S.W. side, to the wall enclosing the

N.E., along both sides of the stream, the whole space is covered; also east and west of it, up the sides of the hill. There are several small eminences within the walls, from one of which, near the northern theatre, the view of columns seems interminable, and that of the rest of the ruins is beyond every thing attractive from this spot. It is, indeed, a perfect galaxy of art.

Night coming on, it became necessary to retire from this interesting place. We should willingly have remained here for several days, but the Arabs we had seen had, no doubt, given the alarm, and it was probable that their second visit would not go off so quietly as the first. The nearest place was Souf, lying W.N.W.

Ascending the western hill on our way thither, in about half an hour we came to what was probably the Necropolis or burying-place of Djerash. The crest of the hill was literally covered with elegant sarcophagi, formed of the calcareous stone of which the surrounding mountains are composed. They were of different sizes and generally opened. On the sides of some of them were sculptured ornaments in bas relief, such as festoons, genii, etc. The covers were flat. Some were inscribed, but we had no time to copy them. In one hour we reached Souf, situated on the declivity of a mountain, on the west side of a wady called El Deir, the stream of which is supplied from three copious sources, that issue from under a rock near the village, at a short distance from each other. Their

united waters, called Kerouan, irrigate the plain of Djerash. To the east, on the other side of the wady, rises Djebel Kaf kava, a very high mountain. Here are about a hundred Arab families, living under the government of a sheikh, and independent of the Pasha. The houses are small, flat-roofed, and covered with a kind of clay cement. On this the peasants sit, and often sleep in summer, being protected from the sun and wind by boughs of trees hung across it. Near one of the sources is a ruined square building with broken columns, and some inscriptions. On the opposite side of the river, are some caverns in the sides of the mountain, at present occupied by shepherds with their flocks. We supped in the *medhafe* or stranger's room. It was evident to the people here that we were in want of guides to conduct us out of the dangerous country into which our curiosity had led us. The Sheikh, in particular, seemed to rejoice at our distress, and was talking with his family the whole of the evening, upon the means of turning it to the best account, without offering violence. Our reception in consequence, was any thing but courteous, and as soon as the company had left the room, the wife of our host, and his other women, made no scruple to ask us for every thing which struck their fancy. Amongst these, was a red silk purse I had bought in the bazaars at Tripoli, of no great value, but she asked for it in such an ungracious way, that I refused to give it to her. Contrary to my usual habit, in

this instance I allowed feeling to take the place of policy, which I had afterwards reason to repent of.

Nov. 25.—The same unkind manner and conduct was evinced towards us, until we were plainly told, that our room was preferable to our company. We were the more prepared to expect such an announcement, as our situation in the *medhafe*, where every stranger was admitted, was any thing but pleasant. We retired, therefore, to a hill outside the village, whilst Constantine remained in it, to negotiate for our escort. This was a matter of much difficulty, our finances, by successive robberies, and late expenses to Djerash, being much reduced. We were, indeed, unable to meet the extravagant demands of our host, if such he might be called; he had speculated upon a rich booty, and felt mortified at the disappointment. At length, by the intercession of Mustapha, and the sacrifice of my turban, we succeeded in obtaining an escort of six men, armed with matchlocks, to each of whom we were to pay five piasters per day, during the time we required their services.

We started at noon. The first part of our route, and for nearly an hour and a half, lay through a thick forest of very fine oak-trees. Under any other circumstances, nothing could be more agreeable than our ride through it; but it was notorious for giving shelter to ill-disposed persons. Moreover, we had every reason to mistrust the fidelity

of our pretended escort. Whilst harbouring in my mind these sinister forebodings, four or five horsemen, not yet seen by us rushed out from the wood, and leaning forward with their lances in a hostile attitude, galloped towards us.

Aware that an Arab seldom kills an unresisting foe, I had already put one foot to the ground, the other remaining in the stirrup, when I found that they were friends, being from the same village as our guides. It appears, that seeing us coming they had hid themselves behind some trees to make this trial of our courage: consequently the attitude I had thought it prudent to take, not being in the secret, was a source of much merriment to all parties. In four hours from Souf we reached the village of Tebney. Our reception here was an agreeable contrast to that we had recently met with; we felt that we were gradually getting out of our difficulties. We made acquaintance with a young Israelite from Damascus, who rendered us great services, particularly in determining the true state of the country into which we had just arrived, its bearings, and the character of its inhabitants. The receipt of the *miri* or land-tax of the Haouran, is in the hands of the Jew bankers or *serafs* of the pasha, who have a commission on the amount received. This young man was one of their accredited agents.

Nov. 26.—At noon we started with our young friend, and after four hours' ride over a highly-cultivated country, we halted at Tayeby, where

we took an escort of four more men, to visit the ruins of Om-Keis. The country we passed through this day was of the most beautiful description, being slightly undulated, the crests and sides of the hills clothed with the magnificent oaks, for which this district, the ancient Bashan, is still, as of old, justly celebrated. But for my turbaned companions, and the absence of detached villas, I could frequently have thought myself in Europe. At sunset we arrived at Faour, where we supped in the Sheikh's house, the inhabitants being all Mussulmen. They seemed ill-disposed towards us, were suspicious and disobliging. The place where we passed the night was a large excavated cavern, dark and dirty, and more like a den of thieves than the dwelling of civilized people. These caverns are very numerous in this part of the country; they were evidently executed at a very early period.

Nov. 27.—Started with the sun, having passed a very unpleasant night. After traversing a bleak hilly country, for about two hours, we arrived at Om-Keis, the modern name of the ancient city of Gadara, situated on the crest of the chain of mountains which border the valley of the lake Tabaria and Jordan on the east. The principal ruins, much mutilated, are to be found on a hill, the highest point in the neighbourhood. On its western and northern sides are the remains of two large theatres, built entirely of black stone. The former is the best preserved, the walls and greater

part of the seats yet remain. The form of the area was semicircular; its diameter eighty feet. Underneath them is a gallery, six feet and a half broad, dividing the seats unequally, six rows inside, and fourteen out. The other theatre, which is in a dilapidated state, was of great depth, being built on a part of the steepest declivity of the hill: the uppermost seat was forty feet above the lowest, the area below the seats comparatively small. Before it is a long street running westward, apparently the principal one, the pavement of which remains. On both sides of it are a vast quantity of shafts and columns.

At the termination of the town, is a very solid building. To the east of the hill are a great number of caverns in the calcareous rock. Vast numbers of sarcophagi are lying about: they are all of black stone, nine spans in length, and three in breadth, and ornamented with bass reliefs of genii, festoons, &c., but of very coarse workmanship: they have all been opened. There are no inhabitants. The country about here is very unsafe.—Whilst viewing the ruins, one of our guides had stolen, and secreted under his saddle, a part of Chesney's apparel. On his return he detected the robber; and, seizing his property, in a moment of passion, justified by the action, applied to him the epithet *harami* (robber). The latter immediately levelled his musket at my friend, and would infallibly have killed him, had I not been present to interfere. The rest of our Mussulmen

escort likewise were so incensed at this liberty on the part of a *djacur*, that I had much difficulty in pacifying them: indeed, considering the desolate situation in which this scene occurred, I only wonder that their threats were not followed up by immediate execution.

To the north of Om-Keis, and at some little distance from it, is the deep wady called Sheriat-el-Mandhour, the Hieromax of the Greeks, and Jarmouk of the Israelites. On its right bank are several hot springs, which we were very desirous of visiting, but our guides were unwilling to accompany us to the spot, although seen from here, fearing, as they said, to meet with the Arabs of the Ghor, or valley of the Jordan. We returned to Tayeby by a lower valley, called Wady-el-Arab, extremely fertile, but very partially cultivated.

Nov. 28.—Chesney having completed his visit to the ruins, on this side of the Jordan, he was most desirous of seeing, he was unwilling to return the direct road to Damascus, for fear of meeting with some of the tribe of Beni Szakhr. Accordingly, having procured two guides for Tabaria, we parted company. At noon I overtook a caravan of about eighty or a hundred camels going to the north. I joined them till we halted at sunset at Hebras, the principal village of the district of Kefarat, and one of the largest in these countries, where I was hospitably entertained by a Greek Christian family. One hour

and a half north-east of it are the ruins of Abil, the ancient Abila, one of the towns of the Decapolis; but I am told that neither buildings nor columns remain standing, though broken shafts are met with.

Nov. 29.—At two o'clock in the morning the caravan was again in motion, it being deemed advisable to travel by night, to avoid the Arabs, who are said to infest this neighbourhood. At break of day we reached Mazareib, the name of the first castle on the Hadj road from Damascus, and built by the great Sultan Selim. The form is square, one hundred paces each way. In the interior is an open court, round which are ranges of warehouses, where the provisions for the Hadj are deposited. They consist of wheat, barley, biscuit, rice, tobacco, tent and horse equipage, camel-saddles, rope, ammunition, etc., for the exclusive use of the Pasha, and his immediate suite. At every station as far as Medina, there is a similar castle, filled with similar stores. The flat roofs of the warehouses form a platform, protected by the parapet wall of the castle; within is a mosque. There are no houses beyond its precincts. The pilgrim caravans to Mekka collect here; and here the Pasha, or Emir-el-Hadj, remains encamped for ten days, in order to collect the stragglers, and to pay to the different tribes the accustomed tribute for the passage of the caravan through the Desert. Close by the

castle, on the north-east side, are a number of springs, whose waters unite at a short distance into a large pond, or lake, nearly a mile and a half in circumference. In the midst of it is an island; the water is clear, and abounds with fish. The spring is called Bushe. Mezareib is supposed to occupy the site of Asteroth, the residence of Og, King of Bashan.

In three hours from hence, I reached Shemskein, where I stopped for a moment, to take up what luggage I had left there, when we first joined the Beni Szakhr. In four hours I reached Es Szanamein (the two idols), a very considerable town on the Hadj route, with several ancient buildings and towers, but very thinly inhabited. My reception here was any thing but agreeable. The Sheikh and his guests, who were all very strict Mussulmen, allowed us to pass the evening in the *medhafe* without addressing a single word to Constantine or myself. The inhabitants of the villages in the Hadj road exceed all others in fanaticism.

Nov. 30.—In one hour from Szanamein, we reached the village of Didy:—in one hour more Ghabarib, where there is a ruined castle, and on the side of the road a *birket*, or stone reservoir, with a copious spring. Similar cisterns are met at every station on the Hadj route, as far as Mekka. From hence commences a stony district, extending as far as the summit of Djebel Khiara,

which is called Soubbet Faraoun. Descending into an uncultivated plain, in two hours and a half we came to Khan Danoun, a very considerable building, formerly a caravansary, but now apparently in ruins. About sunset I arrived at my old quarters in Damascus, where, after taking a bath, and changing every article of dress, I sat down to an excellent supper by the side of a blazing fire, with my friend Chesney for a guest. In the evening, I received the congratulations of my friends upon my happy return.

CHAPTER XII.

Description of the Town of Damascus—Its peculiar Oriental Character—Its mixed Population—Houses, Streets, Shops, Bazaars, Khans, Mosques, and Coffee-houses—Trades and Manufactures—Gardens and Environs—Climate of Damascus—Its Ancient and Modern History—Its Antiquities.

On a nearer inspection, Damascus does not altogether answer the expectations held out by its exterior appearance. The ideas of splendour and magnificence promised from afar, subside soon after entering the gates; for, though the one and the other may exist in the palaces of the great, and the private dwellings of the rich, they are not to be met beyond their precincts. The streets, moreover, are narrow and irregular. Their narrowness is peculiar to all hot countries, where shade and coolness are desired; their irregularity, to Turkish towns in general, architectural embellishments being confined to insulated monuments,

or to the interior of private buildings, seldom seen by the public eye. But the chief charm of Damascus, that which captivates the European traveller on his arrival, and follows him in *souvenir*, long after he has quitted it, is its peculiar oriental character. In his wanderings through the city and its environs, he meets with nothing to remind him of home, unless it be suggested by the great contrast of all he sees, as compared with what he has ever seen before. Excepting in the morning and evening, scarcely a soul is to be met with in the streets, and a sort of mysterious silence prevails throughout.

Now and then, in passing under the latticed window of a Turkish mansion, soft whispers are heard, and sometimes the faint notes of a cymboline. Should the stranger's curiosity induce him to pass the threshold or doorway, which generally remains open, he finds himself ushered into a court, planted with trees, with a trickling fountain in the centre, and surrounded by arcades. But nobody comes forward to greet him, and the same stillness and tranquillity reigns within the walls as without them. Should he be attracted by the "busy hum of life," to the neighbourhood of the bazaars, he enters, and finds them crowded with a population, whose features are as varied, as their dress is distinguished by some peculiarity of form or colour;—he listens to their discourse, but none of the languages spoken are familiar to his ear;—

he inspects the merchandise exposed for sale, but his fancy hardly enables him to guess at their utility, still less their destination.

From the bazaars he retires to the coffee-houses. In similar places of resort in Europe, care and thought, resulting from disappointment or sanguine hope, are depicted on the countenances of those that frequent them, old and young. Here all is gravity, patience, and indolence. But to continue these contrasts, observable between the manners and personal character of the Orientals and Europeans, would insensibly lead me to a comparison of their results on society;—a subject which, however interesting in itself, is foreign to this undertaking, as already professed in the introduction. I shall therefore proceed at once to describe the town, such as it appears, taking care to avoid, as much as possible, even the suspicion of exaggeration.

The houses at Damascus, from a few feet from their foundations, are universally built with stone; the remainder with unburnt bricks, covered with a rough lime cast. Houses built of such slight materials must necessarily be of short duration, which will account for the few antiquities which are to be found in the city. But this is not the only objection to this mode of building. In windy weather, the streets are incommoded with dust, and with mire after rain. The effect of their dead walls—they are seldom pierced with windows

towards the street—is dull and monotonous. Now and then, it is enlivened by the gay colours of some public edifice.

The magnificent interior of some of these houses contrasts singularly with the apparent poverty from without. A small low door opens into a quadrangular court, generally paved with marble, in the middle of which a small fountain is constantly playing. During the summer heats a kind of awning is expanded upon ropes, from one side of the principal wall to the other, which can be folded or unfolded at pleasure.* Around the court are open arcades, raised a few feet from the ground, and approached by steps. The floors of these recesses are covered with rich carpets, upon which stands a range of narrow beds or sofas, placed along the sides of the wall, with velvet or damask bolsters, for the company to recline upon.

This is the place of common reception, and where the owner despatches his business. From the arcades are doors, opening into inner apartments, the admission to which is regulated according to the degree of relationship or intimacy which exists between the owner and his visiter, or the distinction that is desired to be shown. The *harem*, or "female apartment," is generally the furthest removed from the entrance, and opens

* See Appendix, No. 25.

out into an interior court, planted with evergreens. This style of building, general in the East, seems to have continued from the remotest ages down to the present times, without alteration, or any attempt at improvement.

The houses here spoken of, are to be found in a secluded (commonly called the Turkish) quarter, remote from the bazaars. Here and there a few carts are seen (carriages are unknown at Damascus), and now and then a string of laden camels are met with; but as the Turks seldom stir, except in the morning or evening, the greatest silence prevails at noonday. In passing along the streets you seldom meet with an inhabitant, and little would you suppose yourself to be in the metropolis of Syria. The other streets are equally narrow, and the shops which line their sides, of mean appearance.

But the bazaars redeem the unfavourable impression which the streets and houses produce upon the stranger on his first arrival. Here, as throughout the East, each class of commodities has its own class of bazaars. They either line the open streets, or are enclosed, and roofed with arches, thus affording shelter from the sun in summer, and from cold and rain in the winter. Many of the latter are very handsome structures, and form agreeable lounging-places to the stranger, who generally passes his mornings amongst them, retiring to the *cafés* in the evening. There are

some entire streets of shops, where nothing but boots, shoes, and slippers are sold; others, where wearing apparel is hung up tastefully to tempt the passing stranger; others again, where the sole articles exposed for sale are saddlery and military accoutrements.

The goldsmiths and silversmiths are confined to a particular quarter or khan, which appears to have been once a Christian church. Here the venders, exclusively Armenians, are at one and the same time manufacturers and retailers. The din produced by the hammering of the precious metals is quite deafening, yet it appears to cause no interruption to business. In general, the bazaars of Damascus are well furnished. The domestic manufactures are few; they consist chiefly of a stuff composed of cotton and silk, and extremely durable; some cabinet work, of fine wood, inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl, and yellow and red leather for boots, shoes, and slippers.

The manufacture of sword-blades, for which Damascus was so long and so justly celebrated, no longer exists; it was removed to Khorassan, in Persia, after the invasion of Tamerlane. They appear to have been made of thin lamina of steel and iron, welded together, so as to unite great flexibility with a keen edge. Those that are made now are of an inferior quality. The productions of the country are:—raw silk, madders, gum, galls,

and opium. The imported goods appear to be: —iron, tin, hardware, West India produce, indigo, muslins, cotton yarns, and white and printed goods. Very fine cloths for women's mantles, and common ones for men's apparel, if cheap, would meet with a ready sale.

On either side of the bazaars are rows of diminutive recesses, around which the articles on sale are invitingly displayed, having small platforms in front, furnished with carpets and cushions for the purchaser to sit down upon. No sooner has the latter taken his seat than the vender commences filling a pipe, which he offers to his customer, at the same time beckoning to the *kavedji* who is in constant attendance, to bring two cups of coffee. A mutual exchange of complimentary phrases follow, but meaning nothing, and intending little. These preliminaries, which are rigorously observed, being once over, the parties commence talking upon business, but not till then. The shopkeepers are a well-dressed, healthy-looking class of people, and extremely civil to strangers.

When the business of the day is done, which is generally towards the Asr (three o'clock, p.m.) they shut up their shops, and retire to their homes. The bazaars are closed at night with iron gates, a few guardians alone remaining to prevent robbery, and to give the alarm in case of fire. The streets of Damascus are not only not

lighted at night, but all circulation in them is, in a manner, interdicted at that hour, there being at the head and end of each, a wooden barrier drawn across it, apparently with a view to prevent insurrectionary movements: so that, to visit a friend in the immediate neighbourhood, one is obliged to be accompanied by a person carrying a paper lanthorn, and armed with a stick, to demand admittance at the several gates.

Besides the bazaars, there are several large khans or caravansaries, where the wholesale merchants have their counting-houses and warehouses. There is one superior to the rest, the entrance to which is from one of the bazaars near the great mosque. A superb gateway, of the pointed arch, vaulted and highly ornamented with sculpture, leads into a spacious quadrangular court, paved with broad, flat stones, smoothly polished, and admirably joined together. Around the sides are arcades for merchandise, above which a broad, open gallery runs round, the outer portion of which is distributed into offices. The whole is covered with lofty domes. The masonry is of black and white stone, one of the peculiar features of the Saracenic style, of which this structure is an admirable specimen.

The mosques of Damascus are both numerous and costly, and are only surpassed in splendour by those of Constantinople. Many of them were formerly Christian churches. The principal one

stands nearly in the centre of the city. It was anciently the cathedral, and dedicated to St. John of Damascus, and is pronounced to be the finest building which the zeal of the early Christians produced in this country. I did not venture beyond the entrance; from whence it appears to be of vast dimensions, and of an imposing effect, but it has been already minutely described by travellers more fortunate than myself.*

It is six hundred and fifty feet in length, and one hundred and fifty in breadth, and has a large and beautiful marble court, with a tank of water, and granite columns of the Corinthian order, supporting arches, the upper ones being half the height of the lower, and forming a double cloister. During my stay at Damascus, I heard that some Christians, strangers to the town, had been punished (bastinadoed) for merely stopping to look into the court, as I had done.

The coffee-houses of an oriental city, being the usual, if not the only places of rendezvous with its inhabitants; they generally rank amongst its most remarkable edifices. Here, in Damascus, they are both numerous and elegant; being mostly built in the kiosk fashion, of wood painted different colours, green and blue predominating, and open on the sides, except where partially closed with plants coiling up the slender columns which support the roof. A raised divan runs round the

* See Appendix, No. 26.

interior, upon which cushions are occasionally placed, for the visiters to lean against. But they are not more remarkable for their picturesque appearance, than for their happily chosen position, being generally situated on the borders of some running stream, the view opening out upon a pretty cascade, with gardens and orchards lying on the opposite bank; thus admirably suited to a contemplative inactive people, like the Turks, the ear being agreeably soothed by the murmurs of the irritated waters whilst the eye reposes with delight upon a mass of rich and variegated foliage —the elm, the ash, the sycamore and willow eminently conspicuous, and each putting forth distinctive claims for admiration.

The refreshments served in these establishments consist of various kinds of sherbets, coffee, and iced waters. The pipe made use of in Damascus is, with very few exceptions, the *argyle* or water-pipe, differing from the *hooka* only in its portable advantages. It consists of a cocoa-nut shell containing the water, in which an upright reed, about eighteen inches long is fixed, to support the tobacco (*tumbek*) and lighted charcoal. This perpendicular tube is grasped by the person who smokes; whilst the fumes, refreshed by passing through the water, are inhaled through a similar reed, reaching from the globe to the mouth. These tubes are sometimes made of silver, as well as the vase itself, and richly sculptured.

The gardens, or rather the enclosed plantations which encompass the town of Damascus on every side, and extend for several miles into the plain, form a rich zone of verdure, rarely seen in other parts to the same extent. In the blossom season, they must be particularly attractive, this country being justly celebrated for the variety, abundance, and excellence of its fruits. The tree which produces the *damson* or *damascene* plum, takes its name from the city. Inviting, however, as they may appear to the new comer, let him beware of an immoderate indulgence in them. They have more than once proved fatal to Europeans, particularly the apricot and white mulberry. Large quantities of dried fruits are annually exported to Constantinople, and other parts of the Levant, and is a source of great revenue to the inhabitants.

The modern town contains no single object of great antiquarian interest; but to the Christian traveller divers localities (which tradition has preserved), are still pointed out, as connected with the residence of Saul in the vicinity;—he, whom over zeal for the observation of the law of Moses, had made a fierce persecutor of the infant church of Christ, until, enlightened by the revelation of his Lord, he awoke from his dream of cruelty and error, and became the most laborious and successful of his preachers. In a long broad street running from east to west, about a mile in length, and forming the principal thoroughfare in the city,

which is probably the one called "Straight" in Acts ix. 2., is a small grotto or cellar, containing a Christian altar and Turkish praying place, said to be the house of Judas, in which Ananias restored sight to Saul upon his return hither from Arabia, —a well-instructed disciple of Christ, and about to enter on the duties of his apostolic office—(Gal. i. 17.) About a quarter of a mile from the eastern gate of the city, a spot is pointed out as the scene of his miraculous conversion; it is marked out by heaps of gravel and earth, the tombs of some devout Christians who lie buried here. On the 25th of January annually, in commemoration of this event, the Christians in Damascus walk in procession to read the history of the apostle's conversion, under the protection of a guard furnished to them by the Pasha. Not far from this spot, the part in the wall is also shown, from which Paul was let down in the night in a basket (after the manner of Rahab in the case of the spies) in order to avoid the persecuting Jews, who watched at the gate to kill him on account of his change of religion (Acts ix. 25).

Part of the town of Damascus is enclosed with a wall of no great height, and apparently of modern date; though in several places it is evidently built with the materials, and on the foundation, of a more ancient one. Nearly in the centre of the city is an inner enclosure, similarly constructed, and defended by towers at intervals. It serves as

a citadel, and is the usual place of residence of the governor of Damascus.

The total population of Damascus is estimated at one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty thousand souls, of whom twelve thousand are Christians, of different sects and denominations, two or three thousand Jews, and the remainder Mahommedans. The latter have long been celebrated for their bigotted attachment to Islamism, and for their hatred and persecution of all other religions. In my own person, I had the unenviable distinction of feeling its effects, and almost before I had entered its walls. Damascus ranks as a city of the highest antiquity; it is first mentioned in Gen. xiv. 15. Josephus ascribes its origin to Uz, the great-grandson of Noah; his father, Aram, the son of Shem, having possessed himself of Syria, which from him received the name of Aram. Hence the appellation of Es Sham, which is given to both the country and its capital by the natives, is supposed by them to be derived from the name of the son of Noah.

The Hebrew name of the city was Damasek or Demesk, by which it is still known, and from which is formed the Damascus of the Greeks and Latins. It originally had its own kings. Being taken by David, and subsequently by Jeroboam, king of Israel, it afterwards was subject to the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, the Greeks and the Romans.

In the time of St. Paul it appears to have been held by Aretas, king of Arabia Petræa, the father-in-law of Herod Antipas. For a short time under the Ommiade dynasty, Damascus was the capital of the Saracen empire or Khalifate, its monarchs having removed to this place from Medina in the seventh century, about forty years after the death of Mohammed. It is now the capital of a pashalic of the Ottoman empire. This city has been more fortunate than most of its contemporaries; though it never attained the elevation and celebrity of some, it has never fallen so low as others. Like them it has been often captured, and several times demolished, but it has always risen again to importance, from the advantages connected with its happy situation; which being of a permanent nature, little doubt can be entertained of a continuance of its long-enjoyed prosperity.

CHAPTER XIII.

Damascus to Aleppo—An Eastern Caravan—Camels and Dromedaries—A Khan, or Caravanserai described—Mussulman Devotions—A "Mirage" of the Moon—Naptha—Kara—The Aeneze Tribe—An anticipated Attack from the Bedouins—Hassiah—Homs, the ancient Emesa—Night Scene in a Khan—Restoun—Hamah, the ancient Epiphaneia—The Aaszy, or Orontes—Valley of the Ghab—Sermein—Khan Touman—Arrival at Aleppo.

DAMASCUS, Dec. 8.—A small caravan starts two or three times a month for Aleppo. The journey is usually performed by them in eleven days, but it might easily be performed in eight or nine. The road lies to the east of the Anti-Libanus chain, and passes through the great cities of Homs and Hamah. In some parts it is pressed upon by the Desert, properly so called, but in general it is carried over a rich cultivable soil, free from sand and stones, though equally destitute of trees and shrubs. Excepting the towns which are indicated in the map, and which form

the usual halting-places of the caravans, few detached villages, or even houses, are to be met with in its whole extent. The precise day of departure of the caravan is determined upon by the merchants in the bazaars of the above respective places.

As it went out of Damascus yesterday evening, and stopt at Touna, a large village two hours from hence, in a north-easterly direction, I hastened this morning to overtake it. For more than an hour out of the city, on this side, the road lay over a paved way, through extensive gardens and cultivated plains; and as it had rained the preceding night the dust was laid, the foliage of the trees refreshed, and the ride in consequence particularly agreeable. At the time I overtook the caravan it was moving along at a slow straggling pace, and I joined it almost without being perceived. It consisted of about a hundred persons mounted on horses or mules, with twenty or thirty camels laden with merchandise. The common load of an Arabian camel is from four to five hundred pounds upon a short journey, and from three to four hundred pounds on a journey of considerable distance. The longer the journey to be undertaken, and the fewer wells to be found on the way, the lighter are the loads. The capability of bearing thirst varies considerably amongst the different races of camels. The Anadolian, accustomed to cold climates and countries copi-

ously watered on all sides, must every second day have its supply of water.

In southern latitudes, camels on a journey must be watered every fourth day, a longer exposure to thirst would probably be fatal to them. The camel trained for riding, which we call a dromedary, is termed in Egypt *hedjein*, and here *deloul*. As I have before observed, it is the same race with the heavy-carrying beast, distinguishable from the latter only, as a hunter is from a coach-horse. To the uninitiated eye the difference is scarcely apparent, except that the riding camel is more sleek, being shorn closely like a sheep; but there is a noble expression in the eyes of the latter, and something in its whole deportment, by which, as among all animals, the generous may be distinguished from the common breed. The best camels for riding, those of the most swift and easy trot, are said to be from the province of Oman. The *deloul el Oman* is celebrated in all the songs of the Arabs.

In Nubia and north-eastern Africa also, the *hedjeins* or dromedaries are much esteemed for the purpose of saddle riding, on account of their docility, their swiftness, and pleasant amble. Some extraordinary feats are related of their speed when forced, but there is reason to doubt whether they ever existed but in the imagination of fanciful Bedouins, though Burckhardt assures us, that the boast of a *hedjein* being able to per-

form a journey of ten days in one (and on this account called Oshâry) is not altogether extravagant.

It is not, however, by their extreme celerity that the *hedjeins* or *delouls* are so much distinguished, as by the ease with which they carry their rider, during an uninterrupted journey of several days and nights, when they are allowed to persevere in their own favourite pace, which is a kind of gentle and easy amble, at the rate of five miles or five miles and a half an hour. To describe this pleasant ambling pace, the Arabs say of a good *deloul*, "His back is so soft that you may drink a cup of coffee while you ride upon him." The *hedjein's* saddle, which differs slightly from the common horse saddle, being worked in leather, is placed on his hump, which, if he has attained his full degree of fatness, assumes the shape of a pyramid extending its base over the entire back. Camels with two humps are not found in Arabia, nor have I seen any since my coming to the East. They belong to a species found only in Mesopotamia. In Egypt the *hedjeins* are guided by a string attached to a nose-ring. In Arabia, they are more obedient to the short stick of the rider than to the bridle.

It is some time before the European traveller can get accustomed to the slow rocking motion of the common transport camel, and on this account, and with a view to my greater independence, I

hired horses on this journey. An hour before sunset we reached Kteifa, a small village enclosed with slight walls, but of sufficient strength to keep out the Arabs, who often approach these parts in search of plunder. Instead of entering the village, we turned into a fine large khan or caravanserai, distant from it a few hundred yards, and likewise enclosed. In the interior of the khan is a large open square, with a fountain in the centre, and a small mosque at one end for the devotions of the Turks. All around are arcades, like the cloisters of a convent, beneath which are small apartments for the accommodation of travellers. The beasts occupy the open space in the centre. A matting (upon which we laid our rugs), some charcoal and water, were all that was furnished by the khanji or keeper of the khan; for this, a trifling gratification is due, but not sufficient to keep the place in repair. Whatever else is wanted must be sent for to the neighbouring village; but, as the bazaars are closed at night, it is well to come provided with butter, rice, and bread: wine can always be procured where there are Christian families.

Dec. 9.—Rose at the *fidjr* (the dawn).—As each Mussulman passed out from under the arched gateway of the khan, he uttered aloud a short prayer or invocation to the Deity, with his eyes raised up to Heaven. This practice of consecrating the day to Him, to whom we owe it, is

certainly edifying, from whatever quarter it may proceed; indeed, the apparent neglect of it, on the part of Christians, as well as that of evening thanksgiving, impresses them unfavourably with regard to our religion. But, on the other hand, this ostentatious mode of praying by the side of the highway (like the Pharisees of old), and at every hour and moment of the day, exposes them to the charge of hypocrisy, inasmuch as the private life of many of them contrasts singularly with their affected piety, when the eyes of the world are fixed upon them.

Soon after quitting the khan (it was still moonlight), I inquired of my guide the name of some water, which I fancied I saw in the plain to the east. The inquiry produced a laugh amongst my hearers. They told me that what I took to be water, was nothing more than the bed of a salt lake, the water of which, evaporating in summer, leaves an incrustation of salt on the earth. It was either this or a "mirage" of the moon, which produced the delusion on the sight.*

In one hour, we passed up a defile to our left, amongst some low hills, apparently a branch of

* On my arrival at Aleppo, I mentioned the circumstance to a gentleman who had frequently performed the journey from thence to Bagdad, and had therefore more than once observed the latter phenomenon in the Desert. On one occasion, he had actually alighted from his camel, to fill his cup with the water he thought he saw before him, ere he discovered his error.

the Anti-Libanus. From a village, called Kusta, situated on a hill to the right of the road, a number of women and children came running down on seeing our approach. They brought with them eggs, bread, dibs, yaghourt, and other provisions, which they offered to us at a very moderate price, and of which most of the travellers availed themselves. From their anxiety to sell these articles, it appears that the peasants here have no fixed market for their produce, but depend entirely upon the caravans, which pass through the mountains, for their support.

In two hours more we reached Naptha, standing on a hill, with a ruined square castle, a khan, and a mosque. I took up my quarters for the night with a Christian family, whose reception of me was of the most friendly kind; and not being annoyed by the presence of Mussulmen, we gave way to every species of innocent mirth, in which all joined, old and young. Our host played on a species of guitar, and sang, whilst the family joined in the choruses. In looking into my saddle bag for some trifle to offer to the children, I found a small quantity of tea, an article which these poor mountaineers had never seen or heard of before. The process of making it amused them much; but as to the taste, I could only make it palatable to them by putting in a great quantity of sugar.

Dec. 10.—In order to refresh our horses, it was agreed to make this a short day's journey: we

therefore came to a halt at Kara, a considerable village, finely situated on the brow of a hill, only three hours from the place where we halted the preceding night. I sent the horses to the khan, and lodged with a Maronite priest. Not wishing to put the good man to any expense, I procured my dinner in the bazaar. It consisted of *khebab*, or small pieces of mutton, roasted on a skewer, and *yaghourt*, or sour milk, mixed up with fresh-baked bread.

In several parts of the plain at our feet, and towards the Desert, I could discern Arab encampments (no doubt those belonging to the Aeneze), their black tents, at this distance, looking like patches of cultivated land. The Aeneze, according to Burckhardt, are the most powerful Arab nation in the vicinity of Syria, and if we add to them their brethren in Nedjd, they may be reckoned one of the most considerable bodies of Bedouins in the Arabian deserts. They are nomades, in the strictest acceptation of the word, for they continue during the whole year in almost constant motion.

In spring, they approach the fountains of Syria, and form a line of encampment extending from near Aleppo to eight days' journey to the south of Damascus. Their principal residence, however, during that time is the Haouran, and its neighbourhood, when they encamp near and among the villages; while in the more northern

country, towards Homs and Hamah, they mostly keep at a certain distance from the inhabited grounds. In these parts, they spend the whole summer seeking pasture and water, purchase in autumn, their winter provision of wheat and barley, and return after the first rains into the interior of the Desert. They are the only true Bedouin nation of Syria, the other tribes in the neighbourhood of this country having more or less degenerated in manners, and several being reduced to subjection; while the free-born Aeneze is still governed by the same laws that spread over the Desert at the beginning of the Mahommedan era.*

Dec. 11.—From Kara we descended this morning into the plain. Tired of the slow pace of the caravan, I was riding on in advance of the others, when suddenly I heard shouts and cries from behind, desiring me to return. Upon inquiring the cause of their alarm, I was told, that as we were now in the plain, it was necessary we should keep together, as much for my own sake as for that of the caravan, which was often attacked at this spot.

A case in point soon occurred. Approaching some low hills, three or four horsemen rode forward, whilst the rest remained behind in a body. As soon as these men had reached the top of the

* See Appendix, No. 27.

hill, and had seen that all was safe for some distance beyond, they discharged their muskets in the air, as a signal for us to follow. I observed great anxiety depicted on the countenances of some of my fellow travellers during this short halt of five minutes, particularly amongst the owners of merchandise. Excepting, however, when they come in overpowering numbers, I was told that there was not much to be apprehended from these marauders (the Bedouins),—for though when he falls in with his national enemy in open battle, and the fame and honour of his tribe are at stake, the Arab frequently displays heroic valour—yet, when they fight merely for plunder, they behave like miserable cowards, and their contests with the peasants always prove them to be such. They are dreadfully afraid of fire arms, and, as caravans usually go provided with such weapons of defence, they have only to be prepared for a sudden attack to be a match for them. When it does take place, the camels are made to couch on the ground in a circle, and from behind the bales with which they are loaded, the travellers fire upon their assailants, as from behind a stone wall.

At the end of seven hours' march we arrived at Hassiah. It stands on the edge of the elevated plain leading towards Palmyra, from which it is distant about two days' journey. I was much annoyed here by some rude Turks entering the

room in which I was, and claiming a "caphar." I resisted at first, on the score of my being a Frank, but was eventually obliged to give way in order to get rid of their company.

Dec. 12.—The morning ushered in very cold, and each one hastened to put on his abba or winter clothing; lighted *argylés* were handed about from mouth to mouth, and were found very agreeable; as well as some *raki* or brandy which my Christian servants had wisely put into the saddle-bags. My Mussulman neighbours waved their scruples on the score of the prohibition, without much difficulty.

In four hours we reached Homs, the ancient Emesa, a very considerable walled town, situated about half way between Damascus and Aleppo. It is watered by a small rivulet, brought from the Orontes. The walls are three miles in circumference, apparently of the same date as those I had seen at Cæsarea on the coast, and encircled with a fosse; within the parapet walls are terraces. Not more than one-third of the interior space is occupied, and that with indifferent houses on the south-west side. To the south is a large ruined castle, built on a high round mount of irregular form, and faced with stone. It is encompassed by a fosse twenty feet deep, and one hundred broad, over which is a bridge of several arches. The top of the hill may be half a mile in circumference. Homs was celebrated in ancient times for its mag-

nificent temple, dedicated to the Sun under the title of Allah-el-Gabal, the name assumed latterly by the Emperor Heliogabalus, who was a native of this place.

Soon after my arrival, I waited upon the Agha, having brought a letter of introduction to him, in the hope of obtaining, through his influence, the means of reaching Tadmor in the desert, the ancient Palmyra. Although it is only three days' journey from hence, he assured me that the Arabs were assembled in great numbers in the intervening space, and that no escort he could offer me, would be any security to my person. In consequence of these representations on the state of the country, already confirmed by inquiries on the road, I reluctantly abandoned this last chance of visiting these celebrated ruins.*

We alighted at a great khan situated just outside the town walls and near to the northern gate. In several parts of the interior court, under the arcades which surround it, fires were lighted and kept up till a late hour; for the night was cold, and few felt disposed or able to sleep, from the noise produced by the talking and singing of the company present, and the discordant instruments of the country heard on every side. To me, if not quite a novel sight, it was an interesting one, from the opportunity it afforded of study-

* See Appendix, No. 28.

ing the people I was travelling amongst; so wrapping myself up in my *maslakh*, yet keeping at sufficient distance from the lights, to make my observations unobserved, I successively passed in review the picturesque groups that were thus thrown into high relief before me, and noticed in silence their various feats and occupations.

In one corner of the quadrangle a party of merchants, surrounded by bales of merchandise, were engaged in earnest conversation, no doubt connected with their commercial pursuits; they appeared to pay no attention to what was going on elsewhere. Not far from these sat the camel drivers, reposing themselves after the fatigues of the morning, and speculating upon the chances and accidents of the morrow. Before them lay the camels themselves, chewing with ridiculous solemnity the food that was laid before them. At no great distance was a group of Sheikhs or Elders listening to an Arab story-teller, but taking no part in it themselves, except by an occasional interruption expressive of wonder and astonishment. In another part of the court were some youths, singing in chorus round a blazing fagot fire, and beating time with their hands and feet. The instrument in use, the name of which I forget, was of the most primitive construction, being nothing more than a skin tightly drawn over a wooden frame, and three or four cords strung across it not unlike the modern guitar. In mak-

ing the circuit of the court, I almost passed unnoticed some Christian families that were huddled together, women, children, and horses, without either light or fire, so great is their dread of the fanatical despots who lord it over them; nevertheless, they seemed less affected by these contrasts than myself, which I could only account for by supposing that long suffering had made them insensible to its poignancy. I invited them to my quarters, and shared with them the supper that my guides had prepared for me whilst parading the court.

Dec. 13.—Crossing a fine plain of rich red earth, for about four hours, we came to some high ground, over the Orontes, on which the village of Restoun is situated. We did not enter it, but took up our quarters at the great khan below it, the walls of which are washed by the river. Near it is a fine stone bridge of several arches. Our stay here was particularly dull; and all regretted the determination of the Sheikhs, which had made this a halting-place, the remaining distance to Hamah being very trifling.

Dec. 14.—We arose at an early hour, and, as we quitted the khan to cross the bridge, owing to the sharp frost of the night before, we were so completely enveloped in a dense fog that overhung the river, that it was with difficulty we could follow one another's footsteps. After four hours' march over an uninteresting country, we arrived at Ha-

mah, the ancient Epiphaneia. The town is pleasantly situated in a narrow valley opening east and west, through which flows the Orontes, and built partly on the declivity and partly on the plain. Here, as at Damascus, the beauty of the houses is confined to the interior, the outside walls being constructed of mud bricks, and any thing but attractive. Nevertheless, I am told there are many excellent houses in the town. The most remarkable is that of the Mutzellim, overlooking the river. The better sort have gardens attached to them. Indeed we found the vegetation here richer than any place we had seen since we left Damascus.

In the middle of the city is a square mound of earth, upon which the castle formerly stood, but of which few traces exist. The stones of which it was constructed have served for materials in the building of the modern houses. There are four bridges over the Orontes, which here is a very pretty stream, though not navigable. It supplies the upper town with water by means of buckets fixed to large wheels (*naoura*) which empty themselves into stone canals, supported by lofty arches, on a level with the upper parts of the town. The largest (I counted ten or twelve) is said to measure seventy feet in diameter. The creaking noise, however, which they incessantly keep up, would make many persons willing to dispense with their utility.

The town of Hamah, not a very ancient one, suffered much from an earthquake in 1157, in common with the other towns of Syria. There are few antiquities. The bazaars are often frequented by the Bedouins from the neighbouring desert, partly to hear what is going on, and partly, to purchase articles of dress; though, as I have said elsewhere, they prefer waiting the arrival of the pedlars of Damascus amongst their tribes.* When in a town, they wear the keffié (handkerchief) over their faces, and drawn close under the chin, to avoid being known. I saw some of them looking quite bewildered, from the novelty of the scene. They affect a great contempt for the inhabitants of cities. There are here about a dozen mosques, one of which has a handsome ancient minaret. The inhabitants are estimated at about twenty thousand, of which there are about three hundred Greek families. I dined with the bishop, a good scholar I am told. Abou-el-Feda, the great Arabian historian and geographer, was a native of this place.

Dec. 16.—On quitting Hamah this morning, our caravan, which had left some of its members on the road, was now replaced by others, whose destination was to the north of Syria. Amongst the latter were several families of distinction removing to Aleppo. The female portion were car-

* See Appendix, No. 29.

ried in litters (*tattowaran*), placed on the backs of camels, and screened by curtains from the gaze of the multitude. The men were mounted on horses richly caparisoned, and followed by attendants on foot, ready to administer to their wants. At this point, the Orontes, or Nahr-el-Aaszy, branches off gradually towards the sea. It is called Aaszy, or "rebellious," from the direction of its course, which is from south to north; whereas, all the other great rivers of this continent—the Euphrates, the Tigris, etc., flow from north to south. The valley through which it flows is called El Ghab, and is bordered on the east side by Djebel Shaehsabou, and on the west side by the mountains of the Anzeyry. Its length, from Kalaat-el-Medyk to Djissr Shogher, in the direction of Antioch, is about three hours; its breadth about two, but becoming narrower towards the north. Burckhardt compares it, in point of picturesque beauty, to the valley of the Bekaa, between the two Libani; though he adds, that it has the advantage over the latter in the number of springs and rivulets by which it is watered, especially from the eastern mountains.

In the winter season the Aaszy inundates a part of the low grounds through which it flows, thus insulating the villages, and cutting off all communication between them except by boats. In summer, the inundation subsides, but the lakes remain, and give birth to swarms of flies and gnats, which,

coupled with the exhalations from the marshes, oblige the inhabitants to retire into the mountains with their cattle, goods, and chattels. The inhabitants of the Ghab, called Arab-el-Ghab, being a mongrel race of Arabs and Fellahs, cultivate *dhourra* and wheat, and rear large herds of buffaloes. Howash is the principal village of the Ghab. It consists of one hundred and fifty huts, the walls of which are of mud, and covered in with reeds collected on the banks of the Orontes. At the end of three hours we reached Khan Shekune, soon after which the Kalaat-el-Medyk, or "Castle of Medyk," was pointed out to us in the mountains to the left. It occupies the site of Apameia.

In eight hours from Hamah we arrived at Marrah, the ancient Asia, now a poor little village, but prettily situated on the brow of a hill overlooking the plain. The inhabitants being exclusively Mussulmen, I was obliged to take up my quarters with them; but, contrary to my expectations, I found my host disinterested, and devoid of prejudices, particularly as regarded the women.

Dec. 17.—In seven hours we arrived at Sermein, a place remarkable for the great number of ancient cisterns and wells hewn in the rock, which are still found in its neighbourhood. They serve to water the peasants' cattle in the summer, there being no springs in these parts.

Two hours and a half to the west of this place is Edlip, built round the foot of a hill, which divides

it in two parts, and surrounded by olive plantations. The principal trade of Edlip is in soap; there are some manufactories of cotton stuffs, and a few dyeing houses.

Dec. 18.—The distance from Sermein to Aleppo is ten hours and a half. It was quite dark when we left the village, and we were guided only by the *mashala* or torches of dried chips of pine, contained in iron boxes fixed to the ends of long poles. In eight hours we reached the khan called Touman, near a village of the same name, situated on the Koeik or river of Aleppo. We found here a great number of persons waiting the arrival of the caravan, having come thus far from the city to meet the friends whom they expected. A general discharge of all the fire-arms belonging to the caravan took place as we approached Aleppo, which we reached at the expiration of two hours from the khan.

CHAPTER XIV.

Aleppo, the ancient Berrœa—Halt of the Author during the Winter Months—Levantine Consuls—Description of the Town—Its Khans, Okallahs, Mosques, and Bazaars—The River Koeik—The Kalaat, or Castle of Aleppo—An earthquake—European Society—Syrian Female Costume—Philanthropy of the Turks—Aleppine Zoophilists—Gardens of Aleppo—Environs—Cemeteries—Valley of Salt—Salt Lake.

As in consequence of the uncertainty of my movements for some time past, I had been deprived of any communications from my family or friends, I came to the resolution of halting at Aleppo till I should have the satisfaction of receiving a letter from home; a pleasure to which I had long been a stranger, though I availed myself of every opportunity which presented itself, of acquainting them of my progress through these unfrequented parts. Foreseeing, therefore, a protracted detention here, I made arrangements with a friend, M. Duci, for taking up my abode in the house he occupied, which was one of the best in Aleppo, and belonged to Mr. Barker, formerly

Consul at this place, and now advanced to that of Alexandria. Mr. Barker, by his marriage with Miss Hayes, the daughter of a former merchant at this place, is the owner of other houses in Aleppo; but such is the depreciation in the value of property here, that for one, which in better times cost three thousand pounds sterling, not more than two hundred and fifty are now offered, and that by only one person.

The ceremonies accompanying the introduction of a stranger to the Consuls, at this place, were it not for the loss of valuable time that it occasions, would be considered highly amusing. Scarcely has he arrived in the town than he is told what is required of him in this respect, as if it were a matter of paramount importance in his social duties. Among the representatives of the great European powers, that of Austria stands first in rank, consequently to him the first visit is due; next in precedence is France, then our own country, and so on with the rest. Should the traveller be so unfortunate as to bungle in these minutiæ of court etiquette, he would never hear the end of it, as long as he remained in the town. But this is not all. As soon as the stranger has finished his round of visits, which necessarily take up several days, he is bound to wait at home as many more, to receive the visits of the Consuls in return.

On these occasions, their Excellencies come in full uniform, preceded by a Janissary, with a sil-

ver-headed stick, and followed by the Cancelliere, Dragoman, and a host of scribes. Such an influx of strangers entering all at one and the same time, the usual quiet premises of an eastern dwelling, is calculated to alarm the traveller who is not prepared for their reception. If he be any way nervous, his fears might lead him to suppose that the Kadhi was come to arrest him.* At these, as well as at the preceding meetings, as there is but little sympathy of feeling and ideas between the parties, *ennui* generally presides, and glad is the traveller when they are over. As soon as I recovered my liberty, I availed myself of it in favour of pursuits more congenial to my taste and habits of life.

Aleppo, the ancient Berrœa, styled by the natives Haleb-es-Shabha, is situated in lat. 36. 11. 25. north, by 37. 9. east, and is seventy-six miles from the sea (at Iskenderoun) in a straight line, and ninety by way of Antioch. It communicates with Europe, by way of Iskenderoun and Latakia; with Egypt, by Damascus and El Arish; with Asia Minor, by Tarsus, and Armenia, by Diabekir. It probably first rose to importance on the destruction of Palmyra, to which it succeeded. Like its rival and predecessor, it was admirably situated for the purposes of trade, as long as the communication with the East, by the Desert, was the only one known.

* See Appendix, No. 30.

The productions of Persia and India were brought hither, by caravans from Bagdad and Bassora, to be from hence sent to all parts of Europe. Owing to these commercial advantages, which it enjoyed uninterruptedly for many centuries, it gradually became one of the most important cities of the Ottoman dominions. It claimed to be considered the metropolis of Syria, and was only inferior to Constantinople and Cairo, in magnitude, population, and opulence. But the discovery of a maritime passage to the sources of its wealth was the first blow to its prosperity, which has been gradually declining till the present day. It has now dwindled into a place of comparative insignificance, locally as well as politically. Nothing can be more melancholy than the sight of the ravages, which every where present themselves, of an earthquake, which, in 1822, laid the greater part of the city in ruins. Large fissures appear in the walls, and huge stones, hanging as it were by a thread, seem to threaten the passenger with destruction.

The town of Aleppo stands in an open plain, encompassed at the distance of a few miles by low hills, and comprises, including its extensive suburbs and the intermediate valleys, a circuit of seven miles. But the city itself is not above three miles and a half in circumference. The walls are of hewn stone, about thirty feet high, and twenty broad. They bear nowhere marks of high anti-

quity, but are supposed, from the massive style of the architecture, to be of Saracen construction. There was originally a broad, deep fosse, but it is at present, in most places, filled up with rubbish, or converted into garden grounds. The rubbish here spoken of appears to be chiefly the materials of houses thrown down by the earthquake, and subsequently to that event, either carried out of the city and removed to a little distance, or thrown over the walls as a more expeditious way of getting rid of it. In some places, particularly to the south side, the hillocks thus formed have risen to the height of the walls themselves, and form a passage into the city independent of the gates. The appearance of the city from without is much disfigured by this accumulation of filth, and its safety endangered in case of a sudden attack; but in these parts, apathy and inaction are the characteristics of the governor and the governed.

There are nine gates;—two to the south, two to the east, two to the north, and three to the west. The houses are all built of freestone, found in the neighbouring quarries, which is of a whitish red colour, soft when first cut, but indurating after being exposed some time to the air. They are not less remarkable for their elegance than for their solidity. Those belonging to the better classes are built round a paved court, with a garden in the rear, and seldom rise above two stories in height.

The rooms are generally lofty, the ceilings highly decorated with Arabesques, the windows large, and ornamented with painted glass.

The roof of every house is flat, and to defend it from the injuries of the weather, it is covered with a strong plaster of terrace. It is surrounded with a wall breast high, which forms the partition with the contiguous houses, and prevents one from falling into the street on one side, and into the court on the other. Sometimes, instead of the parapet wall, a thin balustrade or latticed work, forms the only separation. Hither the inhabitants repair to enjoy the refreshing breezes of the evening; and here, during the summer heats, they lay down their mattresses, and pass the night, without tent or covering of any kind.

As Aleppo is built upon rather level ground, one may easily, by climbing over the partition walls, pass along the tops of the houses, from one end of the city to the other, without coming down into the streets. These private dwellings, in the construction of which, individuals enriched by trade have displayed so much taste and refinement, uniting all the comforts of the West, with the luxuries of the East, contribute little to the embellishment of the city. High walls, pierced by a few small windows guarded with lattices, are all that present themselves towards the streets, which they make to appear gloomy, and more narrow than they really are. The latter are well paved, and remark-

ably clean, having moreover, for the accommodation of foot passengers, a pathway, raised on each side, half a foot above the horseway.

The reader may have often heard talk of the philanthropy of the Turks. If my personal observation permits me to be a judge in the matter, I would say that they have credit for a virtue they do not in reality possess; at least in our christian acceptation of the word, which makes it extend to all mankind, of whatever nation or religion they may be. I know some travellers have been seduced into a sort of admiration of Mussulmen by an ostentatious display of feeling for the brute creation. In that case, the word philanthropy is a misnomer, and I propose substituting that of Zoophilists. The animals that come in for a large share of the sympathies of the Aleppine Zoophilists are of the canine and feline species.

The quantity of dogs lying about the streets is quite terrific. At every ten steps one or more is met with, and frequently with a litter of whelps lying near them. They have no masters, although they are regularly fed by the person at whose door chance gave them birth. From this post, once taken up, they never stir till the day of their deaths, nor does any stranger-dog ever attempt to displace them, or contest the possession of a good place. During the day, being generally asleep, their existence is hardly perceived, but at nightfall, when a "bone" is literally the subject of conten-

tion between them, or as long as any body is stirring after dark, their yelling is troublesome beyond description.

At this hour, should an inhabitant incautiously wander out without a light and unarmed, he might become the victim of their ferocity; and it would not, perhaps, be the first time that his assailants had tasted of human flesh. Their fecundity is very great, and their numbers would increase to an alarming degree, were it not counteracted by a mortality almost keeping pace with their powers of propagation. I do not hear that they are often attacked with hydrophobia. They are all of one species; the same that is met with in all the large towns of the Levant.*

There are several large khans or okallas in the town, in which the merchants, particularly foreigners, usually reside. In general, they are very handsome buildings, being built of hewn stone, with a double row of arcades opening into an interior court; the upper ones serving for counting-houses, and the lower ones for stores for merchandise. A large fountain in the centre supplies water to the beasts of burden which are loaded and unloaded in the open space. During my stay here, after an interrupted communication of several months, owing to the war between the Sultan and the Pasha of Bagdad, a caravan of from twelve to fifteen hundred camels arrived from the

* See Appendix, No. 31.

latter place. They occupied several days in discharging their cargoes, a great portion of which was damaged in fording the Euphrates, owing to the swollen state of the river.

The mosques of Aleppo, though numerous, are not remarkable for their architectural beauties. Indeed, most of them have suffered, if not completely in ruins, from the effects of the earthquakes to which the town has been so often exposed. The Djameé Zacharié and that called El Halawé form exceptions. The former was originally a Christian church, and is held in great sanctity by Mussulmen. Besides these, there are ten or twelve more modest edifices dedicated to Christian worship, to which are attached the episcopal residences of each sect. The convent of the Terra Santa is situated in the Khan el Sehebene, that of the Capucines in the Janabié, and of the Lazarists, in the Bendequié.

The city is supplied with good water from two springs, which rise near Heylan, a village about eight miles to the northward. From hence it is conveyed by an aqueduct, partly on a level with the ground (in some places covered, but mostly open) and partly subterraneous, refreshed by air shafts; it is then distributed to the public fountains, baths, seraglios, and as many of the private houses as chose to be at the expense, by means of earthern and leaden pipes. This aqueduct is supposed to have been coeval with the city, but is

said to have been repaired by the mother of Constantine, and subsequently by Al Melek el Daher, the son of Saladin. It is cleansed annually in the month of May. The water of the wells is brackish.* The Koeik (the Chalus of the ancients) in the summer months is a slender stream, gliding with a slow and silent current westward of the city, but at this season it swells to a formidable river. It rises near Aintab, at the foot of Mount Taurus, to the north. When within a quarter of a mile of one of the western gates, it takes a sudden turn to the eastward, and passing under a bridge near that gate, after a course of a third of a mile, turns off towards the hills, and runs south through a cultivated valley, till it loses itself finally in a morass, about six leagues below Aleppo.

The town is divided into quarters or districts, each quarter inhabited by a distinct population. The principal one, called El Medine (the city), is where the Europeans and the chief Turks reside. El Djedaide is inhabited almost exclusively by the Christians, of all sects. The Jews are restricted to a quarter called Bahrita. The Turkmans, Kurds, and Arabs live in the faubourgs to the east of the city. Subsequent to the last great earth-

* A singular disease, by some attributed to the water, attacks the inhabitants of this city at least once in their lives. It is called *habal es sine*, "ulcer of one year," from its being one year from the time the part is first attacked till it heals. It generally leaves a scar for life.

quake in 1822, a new faubourg, lying to the south of the town, has risen into importance. The houses here, being only intended for a temporary asylum, were built of wood, with walls of lath and plaster; but from fear to return into the city, grown into a habit (which the people here with difficulty break through), they are become permanent dwellings throughout the year, whilst the larger ones remain almost tenantless.

Nearly at the north-east corner of the city is the castle (El Kalaat) seated on a high mount of a circular figure, and encompassed by a broad deep fosse half a mile in circumference. It is approached by an inclined bridge of seven arches, and entered by a double gate. The walls are flanked with towers at intervals. The interior space is covered with ruins. In one of the subterraneous chambers, no doubt the ancient armoury of the citadel, we found several thousand small arrows, tied up in bundles. They are about thirty inches long, and apparently were dipped in poison. We likewise observed helmets and pieces of armour. Burckhardt says that coats of mail are not uncommon in some parts of Arabia. The late Wahaby chief, Ibn Saoud, constantly wore one under his shirt. Such coats are of antique workmanship, and belonged probably to the European knights of the crusades. The panoramic view of the citadel, embracing the town and faubourgs is very fine; but that towards the desert extremely dreary. The air of Aleppo is keen, but

deemed very wholesome. Epidemic diseases are, I understand, extremely rare.

During my stay at Aleppo, I was kept in constant apprehension of some accident from earthquakes—frequent shocks were felt, but they were generally slight, and not attended with any loss of life. On one occasion, soon after my arrival, whilst visiting one of the Consuls, and seated on a divan by his side, our conversation was suddenly interrupted by a rumbling noise from without followed by a tremulous motion of every thing about us, whilst the house appeared to be lifted up over a succession of low waves. Four or five persons were in the room at the time, and each exclaiming "Zelzalé!" (an earthquake), rushed down stairs into the court below. I had not much time to deliberate what step to take; but I did not follow their example, for I was afraid of the walls coming down upon my head as I attempted to escape. I therefore resigned myself into the hands of Providence, and awaited the result with Mussulman stoicism. The shock did not last many seconds, but the moment of suspense was awful in the extreme. Consternation was depicted in every countenance. Many fell faint and sick; the meeting broke up and each one returned to his home.

My road home lay through the bazaars. Here I saw Turks and Christians by the side of one another (for at this awful moment all animosities arising out of religious creeds seemed to have

ceased), in the attitude of supplicating the Almighty for protection. At every moment we expected a renewed and more violent shock. Fortunately for the city and its inhabitants, its course was horizontal;—had it been vertical, the destruction of one and the other must inevitably have ensued.

The European society in Aleppo, partly owing to its ruined commerce, and partly to the emigrations caused by the dreadful earthquake of 1822, has been reduced to the families of the consular agents, and about a dozen others, established here for the purposes of trade. But even these are rather to be considered as Levantines than Europeans, most of them having been born on the spot, without ever quitting it, except for very short periods together. From their stationary habits, one would suppose that society would bear the stamp of non-intercourse with Europeans; but such is not the case. To much ease of manners, which they possess in common with the mother country, they are distinguished by some amiable qualities, peculiar to themselves; such as a perpetual gaiety and cheerfulness, arising partly from the geniality of the climate, and partly from their limited ambition, which circumscribes their desires to the strict necessaries of life. Nevertheless, great rivalship exists amongst them. Nothing is more common than to hear of families at variance with one another; and though these quarrels generally originate in trifles, for want of graver subjects to

occupy their minds, a cold and sometimes rancorous feeling is perpetuated for years together. The amusements of Aleppo seem to consist mainly in meeting for the purposes of conversation. Some attempt was made this carnival to give balls and musical parties; but though they seemed to afford much amusement to the natives, to me, a stranger, they appeared insufferably dull.

The total population of Aleppo does not exceed seventy thousand souls. The inhabitants are represented as being of a mild and peaceful character, except when excited by religious disputes (a very large proportion of them being Sheriffs, the real or pretended descendants of the Prophet), sober, and regular in their habits. During the three months I spent here, no single instance of popular tumult occurred, a species of tranquillity unknown to them under the disorderly despotism of the Janissaries.

The European dress is sometimes seen in the streets of Aleppo, but it is confined to the men. The women all wear the Syrian costume, with some slight difference in the shape of the turban; the plaits of which are stiff, being sewn firmly together, and covered with a rich profusion of pearls and other ornaments, more or less rich, according to the rank and station of the wearer.

The language spoken here by the natives is the vulgar Arabic, though their pronunciation of it is marked by some local peculiarities. Burckhardt in preparing himself for his mission into the inte-

rior of Africa, studied here. Many of the people of condition are also taught the Turkish, which prevails almost exclusively north of Aleppo. The language commonly used by the Europeans or Franks, is the Italian.

The "gardens" of Aleppo, situated to the south-east of the city, however beautiful they may appear to the eyes of the natives, are not in reality what is conveyed by that word to the European ear. They consist merely of slips of cultivated soil lying on the banks of a small rivulet, to which they owe all their fertility, and enclosed by hedges or low stone walls. These enclosures are planted with fruit trees promiscuously, with some vegetables growing between them, but seldom flowers. They are pleasant places of retreat during the heat of the day, or at night to listen to the bulbul's (nightingale) plaintive song; but I felt much disappointment at their actual appearance, and the absence of all taste in their arrangement.

On some rising grounds, to the east and south-east of the town, where the soil is remarkably stony and arid, is a rather extensive plantation of pistachio trees. The *fistuk*, or pistachio, delights in a dry soil. Formerly this country was famous for the growth of this tree, but they have greatly declined of late years.

To the west and south-west of the town, the slopes of the hills which border both sides of the river are laid out into vineyards, olive plantations,

and fig-gardens. These several places are the only agreeable spots in the immediate neighbourhood of Aleppo. On every other side arid plains and barren mountains meet the eye in every direction. Even the cemeteries, that here encompass the city all around, are without the usual embellishments of cypress groves, and other funeral trees, so common to the eastern cities; and as it is never allowed to displace a Mussulman's bones, however long he may have been interred, the number of grave-stones have increased prodigiously, and much valuable land is sacrificed in consequence.

About eighteen miles to the south-east of the city is the "Valley of Salt," or Salt Lake; from whence the country for many miles round is supplied with salt. The valley, which is about five miles long, and between two and three miles broad, is partly skirted by a chain of low rocky hills, but stretches out on the other sides towards the Desert as far as the eye can reach. The rains which fall during the winter months, and the river Hahab, together with the little temporary torrents which descend from the bordering hills, join with the springs rising in the valley itself, and form a shallow, but very extensive lake, the water of which being exhaled by slow evaporation in summer, the salt separated from the soil beneath is left crystallized on the surface, forming a crust on the valley, varying in thickness from one

to two inches. In the month of August it is collected, and put into sacks, and conveyed to the village of Jibool, to be kept in magazines till the period of sale.

About six hours north-west of Aleppo, and to the north of the road, is the ruined convent of St. Simon Stylites, which, in the sixth and seventh centuries, was celebrated for the devotion paid to this saint, and for the spaciousness and magnificence of its buildings. Some remains of the famous pillar upon which St. Simon lived for so many years, are still shown to pious devotees. A number of ruined villages lie in this direction.

CHAPTER XV.

Set out for Antioch and the Coast—Arabian Horses—The "Sunk Village" — Termine—Fertile Valley of Khalaka — Deserted Towns and Villages — District inhabited by the Ryhanlu Turkomans — Khareim — Arrival at Antioch — Excursions in the neighbourhood of Antioch—Iskenderoun—Payas, the ancient Baiœ—Beilan—Mount Amanus—Souadiah—Ruins of Seleucia —Return to Antioch along the Banks of the Orontes—Antiquities of Antioch.

ALEPPO, March 23.—Set out for Antioch and the coast.—Habits of indolence, and the heavy rains which had fallen without intermission for some weeks past, had prevented me hitherto, quitting Aleppo; but having fixed this day for my departure in company with some gentlemen, who were about to embark for Europe at Iskenderoun. I was at length able to control my irresolution. When once the European traveller has fallen into the listless habits of the Orientals, it requires much moral energy to break himself from their chains, although, as one of the latter would say, they are but of silk. I do not, however, give

myself credit for possessing this virtue in a great degree. It was rather a thirst of novelty and beauty, in nature and art, ever growing with indulgence, than a consciousness of my supineness, that roused me from my lethargy.

Having purchased a couple of horses of the Turkman breed,* one for myself, the other for my servant, I hired, in addition, a mule for the carriage of my luggage. I should not omit here to relate the singular mode of making a bargain for horse-flesh in this country. The broker employed on this occasion, after much apparent difficulty on the part of the owner, to surrender the horses at the prices I was not willing to exceed (viz., about five-and-twenty pounds each), brought our hands together in confirmation of our agreement. This done, he picked up some earth from the ground, which he put into the hollow of my hand, closing it again with his, at the same time asking me, if in case the horses turned out not to be worth more than the earth I held, I was willing to abide by the bargain. As I had been allowed some few days' trial, I assented, but I could not help objecting, in principle, to an agreement where both parties were not equally bound to one another.

The morning ushered in inauspiciously for our journey — drizzling rain with cold and damp.

* See Appendix, No. 32.

Nevertheless, we were accompanied by our friends to some distance from the town. We met with nothing worthy of notice for the first ten or twelve miles. At this distance we came to a remarkable cavity, in the solid rock of the mountain, having some resemblance to the crater of a volcano, though no lava is to be found near it. In form, it is nearly circular, and between five and six hundred paces in circumference at the brim, from whence it gradually diminishes towards the bottom. It contains no water; but from the bottom, and from the interstices of the sides, which are lined with horizontal strata of rock, varying from ten to fifteen feet in thickness, a variety of plants and shrubs grow out in wild luxuriancy. We judged the depth to be not less than one hundred and fifty feet. As it was raining hard when we arrived here, and as the descent appeared to be an arduous enterprise, we did not attempt to examine it more particularly, though we saw enough to convince us that it is a natural production, as old as the creation. It is called by the natives the "Sunk Village."

In eight hours we reached the village of Termine, consisting of a few miserable huts, the owners of which being fellahs, they had a vast number of cattle. In one of the stables, or cow-sheds, the night being cold, we swept out a corner on which we spread our carpet rugs, cooked a supper, and slept well; notwithstanding the

striking contrast it exhibited with our recent habits of luxury in Aleppo.

March 24.—The weather this morning cleared up, and our ride, in consequence, was more agreeable than that of the preceding day. The country also, over which we travelled, wore a more cheerful aspect, being less stony, and not quite so deserted as that lying around Aleppo. The first part of our route lay over a valley of an oval shape, nearly twenty miles in circuit, and surrounded by low hills. The soil of the plain is a fine red mould, almost without a stone, and seems highly productive. A vast number of stone-built villages appear on the heights around it, though mostly in ruins; nevertheless, the style of building sufficiently indicates the opulence of their ancient possessors. The most important of these villages is that called Dana, formerly a place of some consideration, as appears by the ruins, especially some sepulchral grots, cut down into the rock, which is hollowed out into courts, with apartments around them.

After crossing the rocky calcareous hills which border the valley on its western side, we descended into the district inhabited exclusively by the Ryhanlu Turkmans, and consisting of a series of hills and valleys extending above forty miles in a north-west direction, their average breadth being about fifteen or twenty. The Turkmans erect their tents on the declivities, and cultivate the

valleys between them. The fields are sown with wheat, barley, and several kinds of pulse. It is not long since they have become agriculturists. The population may be roughly calculated from the number of their tents, which amount to two or three thousand, every tent containing from two or three to fifteen inmates.

The Ryhanlu Turkmans are divided into several minor tribes. Each tribe has its own chief, whose rank in the Divan is determined by the strength of his tribe. They do not pay any Miri, or general land tax, to the Grand Signior, for the ground they occupy. Like most of the larger Turkman nations, they are a nomade people. Towards the end of September, they begin to appear in the plain of Antioch, where they remain in their winter quarters until about the middle of April, when the flies of the plain begin to torment their horses and cattle. They then direct their march towards Marash, and remain in the neighbourhood of that place about one month; from thence they reach the mountains of Gurun and Albostan. The mountains which they occupy are called Keukduli, Singulu, and Kara Dorouk. Here they pass the hottest summer months; in autumn they repass the plains of Albostan, and return by the same route towards Antioch.

The Turkmans, like all nomadic nations, are represented to be extremely indolent, spending the whole day in their tents, smoking, sipping

coffee, of which they consume a great quantity, and conversing. They do not even till their own lands themselves. This more laborious task is done by poor fellahs, the remaining peasants of the abandoned villages, and the original inhabitants of the country. Their women, on the other hand, are extremely industrious. Besides the care of housekeeping, they work the tent coverings of goats' hair, and the woollen carpets, which are inferior only to those of Persian manufacture. Their looms are of primitive simplicity; they do not make use of the shuttle, but pass the woof with their hands.

In passing over this district, we kept the path lying at the foot of the southern hills, the lower parts of the plain being flooded by the late continued rains; and at the end of seven hours reached Khareim, a strong fortress, apparently of the middle ages, situated on the top of an insulated hill, approachable only on one side by a narrow pathway. It is now a complete ruin, and the only place affording shelter was the stable, to obtain possession of which, we were obliged to turn out some poor gipsies, called here Kurpadh; these Kurpadh are spread over the whole of Anadolia and Syria. We were sufficiently punished for this act of injustice, by the restless night we spent, it being impossible to get any sleep, owing to the swarms of fleas which infested the place.

March 25.—Descending into the plain, and

continuing our route westward, after fording with difficulty many small but deep torrents that fall from the mountains to the south, at the end of four hours, we reached the Nahr-el-Aaszy, the Orontes, which we crossed by a stone bridge, called Djissr-el-Hadeed, "the Iron Bridge," so named from its gates (one at either end), which are coated with iron. It was lately rebuilt by a Frank engineer, an inhabitant of Aleppo. On the west side of the bridge is a village of Kurds, tributary to the Mutzellim of Antioch. The route from hence lies south-west, over an uncultivated plain, for an hour and a half more, when we reached Bab Boulos (gate of St. Paul), one of the ancient gates of the old city of Antioch. The modern town, called Antaki, is half a mile further towards the western extremity of the walls.

For about half a mile before we reached the gate just mentioned, we observed the remains of an ancient pavement; and immediately within the gate, to the left of the road on entering, a fine clear spring, shaded with trees,—a very picturesque spot, and much resorted to by the inhabitants, in their hours of recreation. We alighted at the house of Djorjas Dip, general European Agent in this city. Having made his acquaintance at Aleppo, he had given me a letter to his family, by whom I was received with every possible demonstration of kindness. It is the common halting-place of travellers. The windows of M.

Dip's house command a view of the Orontes, and down the valley towards the sea. Just at this part of the river a dam is thrown across it, in an oblique direction, to turn a *naoura*, or water-wheel, thirty or forty feet in diameter. The latter supplies water to the town, particularly to the baths, of which there are several.

Antioch, March 26.—The modern town of Antioch occupies not more than one-fifth of the ancient enclosure. The most remarkable features in the houses here, as differing with the rest of Syria, are that, besides being low, they have sloping roofs covered with thin tiles, instead of flat terraces; and have only one story above ground, built of slight materials. This style of building probably originated in the necessity of preparing for the shocks of earthquakes, which are very frequent in these parts.* There are ten or twelve mosques, with low minarets, mostly mean structures. The inhabitants may amount to about six thousand, and are governed by a Mutzellim, tributary to the Pasha of Aleppo.

Within the precincts of the modern town there are few remains of ancient buildings; the walls and the aqueduct are the only works of antiquity deserving of notice. The ancient city was situ-

* This city has been peculiarly subject to the destructive visitations of earthquakes, It was almost demolished in the years A.D. 340, 394, 396, 456, 526, 528, and 568. By this last, above 60,000 persons perished.

ated on the summit and the north side of two high hills, and on the plain between them and the river (Orontes). It was composed of four distinct towns, or quarters, thence sometimes called Tetrapolis. The hill to the south-west is high and very steep; that to the east is lower, and there is a small plain on the top of it. The walls which now exist, though much ruined, distinctly mark out the ancient boundary. The form of them is nearly of a rectangular figure; and the space enclosed between three and four miles in circumference. Of the longest sides, running north-west and south-east, one confined the town on the plain, and the other along the ridges of the precipices above. The short sides were partly on the plain, and partly on the slopes of the mountain. They are about twenty feet high, and are flanked with square towers at intervals.

That which runs up the west side of the hill is the most striking, and is apparently of high antiquity.* It is constructed of hewn stone, faced smoothly, with beautiful towers at equal distances. From its standing on a rock, and originally well built, it has hitherto resisted the effects of time, and the shocks of earthquakes. There are no battlements to the wall, but there is a broad walk

* "I am persuaded that this is the very wall built by Seleucus; and yet there is not the least breach in it, nor any sign of any, and from this one may judge how beautiful all the walls must have been."—(Pococke.)

on the top of it, where it is level; and where there is an ascent it is cut into steps, thus affording a communication all round the city. The portion of this wall which lies in the plain below was defended by the deep bed of a winter torrent. From being built on a less solid foundation it had been often destroyed and repaired. The later repairs, to judge from the fragments that lie about, consisting of masses of stone and brick, are a Roman work. To the south of the western hill, where there is no descent, the approach is rendered difficult by a deep fosse. The walls here, likewise, have been much repaired, it being the point on which it might have been assaulted with the greater ease.

Towards the east angle of the south side there is a deep ravine (about twenty-five feet wide), formed by two precipices almost perpendicular. It was closed by a solid wall, the greater part of which exists, and was upwards of seventy feet in height. It crossed the bed of a mountain torrent, and had an arch below to admit the passage of the water. The city walls are carried up the ridges of the two mountains, though otherwise inaccessible, so anxious were the inhabitants to place themselves in a complete state of security. On the eastern side of the ravine are some excavations and niches in the rock—some for catacombs; others have been formed after the Christian era, and, by the addition of masonry, have served for

places of devotion. The gate which leads to the ravine is called Bab Hadeed (the iron gate). Without it, on the eastern side is a bridge of five arches, across the valley. The piers are of the natural rock, with arches turned over them. Besides this gate, and Bab Boulos to the east, already mentioned, there were three other principal ones; viz., Bab-el-Djissr (gate of the gardens) opening to the north, Bab-el-Djissr in the north-west angle of the city enclosure, leading to a bridge, and Bab Lataki (Laodicea gate) on the west.

March 27.—Antioch to Iskenderoun.—Wishing to accompany a friend with whom I had journeyed from Aleppo, to the place of his embarkation (Iskenderoun), I left Antioch this morning by the Bab-el-Djissr, leading, as its name implies, to a stone bridge over the Orontes. The first part of the road lies across a rich alluvial plain extending N.N.E. of Antioch.* At the end of five hours it enters the mountains of Beilan, the ancient Amana, which separate it from the coast. This pass in the mountain, called by the ancients Pylæ Syriæ, is celebrated in history as being the one through which Darius marched his mighty army from the plains of Assyria to the coast of Cilicia, a few days before

* Pliny says, that Antioch was divided by the river, from which we may conclude that there was a suburb here to the north, o which, however, there are now no traces left

the battle of Issus. Upon its possession still depends all communication between Syria and Anadolia. A large khan, called Khan Karamout, and a small village of the same name close to it stand at the entrance of the pass. The former is in a ruined state, and the latter almost abandoned; but as this road was formerly infested by robbers, a small tribute (caphar) is still claimed by the few remaining inhabitants for the protection they pretend to afford to travellers. A little beyond Karamout, is a castle situated on the top of a precipice, to the left of the road, in a most romantic situation, called Bagras.

Half an hour from Karamout commences a paved way, leading over the mountain to the town of Beilan, situated on its western brow; but it is at this moment so much out of repair, and the road so cut up by the late heavy rains, that in many places we were obliged to alight and lead our horses. At about two-thirds of the ascent we halted and turned round to enjoy a beautiful prospect, extending over the great plain of Antioch, to the east, and the lake of this name to the north, bounded on that side by the range of the Taurus. The river Afrin, descending from the latter mountains, waters the plain, besides which, there are numerous smaller rivers and sources, which intersect it in various directions. The lake, commonly called Bahr Agoulé, or "White Lake," is plentifully stocked with fish, chiefly

carp and mullet, which, when taken, is salted on the spot, and is carried all over Syria, for the use of the Christians in their long and rigid fasts. It is about forty miles in circumference. Its superabundant waters fall into the Orontes.

After two hours difficult ascent we reached Beilan, situated on either side of a deep, narrow, and elevated valley, and commanding a fine view of the Mediterranean and intervening country. A copious stream from the mountains rushes through the middle of the town, and several aqueducts, some apparently very ancient, cross the valley at close intervals to one another. The houses are all built of stone, with flat terraced roofs, and placed on the slope of the mountain; and when seen from a little distance, being interspersed with a variety of trees, contrasting with huge masses of bare rock, they form an extremely pleasing *coup d'œil*. From the beauty of its situation, the pureness of the air, and the excellence of its waters, Beilan is unquestionably one of the most agreeable places in the north of Syria. It was formerly much frequented by the Europeans of Aleppo and Alexandretta during the summer months, at the time the trade of these places was more flourishing than it is at present. It is still the residence of a great many rich Turkish families, not only for the sake of the advantages just mentioned, and which they know so well how to appreciate, but on account of the

comparative independence they enjoy; being governed by Sheikhs chosen from amongst themselves.

The view that expands before the traveller, as he descends the western brow of Mount Amanus, is one of singular beauty. In front is the magnificent bay of Iskenderoun, formed by Cape Khanzir (Rhossus) on the south, and that of Ayash on the north, with an extended line of coast—that of Karamania, the ancient Cilicia—running far away to the west. The picturesque town of Beilan, and the rocky acclivities by which it is surrounded form the immediate foreground; beyond which lies a narrow verdant plain stretching down to the shore, and apparently highly cultivated. It was the first glimpse of the sea that I had obtained after many months' travel in these parts, and the sight of it, particularly the roadstead, in which were anchored three or four merchant vessels, about to start for Europe, brought forcibly before me all the enticing ideas connected with home, and I resisted with difficulty the temptation held out of returning amongst my friends.

Descending from Beilan, after a halt of a couple of hours, and crossing a succession of low hills, all covered with rich vegetation, in three hours more we arrived at the wretched village of Iskenderoun, standing on a small patch of sand close to the beach. The approach to the town from

the south is over a paved causeway, carried across a low swamp, extending for nearly a mile in this direction, and a still greater distance towards the west and south-west. A vast number of buffaloes were feeding amongst the reeds, some literally buried in the muddy waters, the nose alone remaining visible above the surface.

These marshes are of recent formation; and are generally attributed to two small springs, which issue from under some rocks about a mile from the town to the south; and, not finding a passage through the channels originally cut to carry off their superabundant waters to the sea, have gradually spread over the low ground, and formed a pestiferous swamp. The bay of Iskenderoun, formerly much frequented by vessels, being acknowledged to be the safest anchorage on the whole coast of Syria, is now approached by mariners with fear and dread, from the reported insalubrity of its atmosphere; though it is evident to every one, who sees the place, that a judicious system of drainage is all that is required to render it what it formerly was—a comparatively healthy spot.

It is true that, from the beginning of May to the end of September, the heats are very oppressive, and those who have a regard for their health would do well to avoid sojourning here any time; but that the atmosphere is not so inherently deleterious as has been represented, may be inferred

from the inscriptions on the tombstones standing in the cemetry attached to the Greek church, where most of the deaths recorded seem to have arisen from sheer old age. The monuments themselves, which are of white marble, are likewise free from the least collection of vegetable matter.

March 29.—Iskenderoun, the ancient Alexandria ad Issum the last town of Cilicia, or Alexandretta, as it is called by the Franks, is the natural port of Aleppo, from which it is distant about eighty miles. The town itself is now one mass of ruin, being reduced to a few warehouses, belonging to the merchants of Aleppo, for cargoes discharged, or waiting for a vessel. M. Fornetti is the only European factor living on the spot. The bazaar is reduced to half a dozen shops, where a stranger passing through may get a cup of coffee and replenish his tobacco-bag; but this is all. The remainder of the inhabitants—about a dozen Greek families—get their livelihood by assisting in the embarkation of goods from Aleppo. The imported goods are forwarded to Aleppo and Bagdad on camels. The caravan takes five days to reach the former place, which is about thirty-six hours of a traveller's ordinary rate of going.

There are at this moment, four brigs at anchor in the roads; three French from Marseilles, and one English from Liverpool. Such is the paltry trade of the country, that no vessel, unless spe-

cially chartered, can expect to secure an entire cargo at any single port on the coast. They are obliged to visit them all in succession, from Acre to Iskenderoun northwards, and oftentimes Cyprus, to complete their lading. The British Factory, which, to judge from the extent of ground it covered and its massive walls, was a building of some importance; it now serves for housing cattle.

March 30.—Whilst here, waiting for the embarkation of my friend, I became desirous of visiting some interesting places in the neighbourhood, particularly Payas, the ancient Baiæ, lying on the opposite side of the gulf. The distance is about sixteen miles, and the road to it lies along the beach at the foot of the mountains, which here approach close to the sea. But it being represented to me as very unsafe, without an escort, which it was impossible to procure here, I decided upon the more direct course across the gulf, and for this purpose hired a small open sailing-boat manned by three Greek sailors.

The wind being fair, in less than two hours we entered the little harbour of Payas. The town itself lies further inland, and stands in the centre of a grassy plain of some extent, and at the foot of a very high mountain, with a wide torrent descending on its eastern side towards the sea. I believe it is generally supposed, that the memorable action which decided the fate of Darius and

the Persian empire, was fought in this immediate neighbourhood: but the want of an intelligent guide prevented my becoming familiarized with all the localities connected with this great event. The town of Payas not many years ago, was a wealthy and populous place, and was the residence of the rebel chief Kutchuk Ali, who not only plundered all the caravans, that passed this way, but for a long while levied contributions on all the surrounding districts. It is now almost abandoned; one magnificent pile alone remaining to tell of its former importance, consisting of a bazaar, a khan, baths, mosque, and a castle, apparently all connected together, and built at one and the same time.

On returning this evening to Iskenderoun, we were overtaken by a violent thunder-storm, which was followed by torrents of rain. With much difficulty we kept our little bark from sinking, owing to the darkness of the night, and the quantity of water we shipped at every moment. The winds most to be apprehended in this bay, are the gales from the north-east, and the gusts from the mountains, but these rarely occur before the commencement of the winter and of the spring.

April 1.—Arsous.—I left Iskenderoun this morning with the intention of passing over the Cape Khanzir (Rhossus) to Souedia, and return to Antioch by the valley of the Orontes. Following the coast towards the south, in one hour I came

to the Beilan Sou, or "river of Beilan," being formed by the united streams flowing from the mountain of this name. In two hours and a half I reached an elevated tongue of land, separating the plain of Iskenderoun from that of Arsous. Here I halted to breakfast by the side of a fountain of excellent water. This being the Greek Lent, all my guide had been able to procure in the bazaar of Iskenderoun, was some cold fried fish, and a few dried olives.

Continuing my route, in two hours more, I arrived at Arsous, having passed several streams in the way; amongst others, one which, falling into the sea, whitens it to a considerable distance around. The village of Arsous, consisting of twenty or thirty isolated cottages is pleasantly situated on the double bank of a considerable stream, which comes down from the mountains lying to the eastward. The inhabitants are all fellahs or cultivators. In one of these cottages I took up my abode for the night. My host had been long laid up from fever and ague, which incapacitated him from manual work, and the interests of his young family were suffering in consequence. I made up some doses of quinine, which I gave him, with instructions how to take them (he had never before heard of this medicine), and directed him to reside until cured in one of the highest inhabited places of the neighbouring mountain. He promised to follow my advice

(their faith in Europeans knows no bounds in these matters), and I have no doubt the trial will be attended with success.

April 2.—Arsous.—The Sheikh of this village, who is dependent upon the Pasha of Adana, for some unknown reasons, would not allow me to pass on this way. I was therefore obliged to return back to Antioch by way of Beilan, and over the plain I had traversed the preceding day. On reaching the Beilan Sou, I commenced following its banks, than which nothing can be more beautifully picturesque; the heights here being often abrupt, and well clothed with trees, at present in full blossom. Down their sides several tributary rivulets fall into the river, and descend in pretty cascades from rock to rock towards the sea. Here and there are isolated cottages, with patches of cultivated soil attached to them, from which the green corn is now just springing up.

On arriving at Beilan, I took up my quarters for the night at a farrier's shop, which I had found vacated by its owner. It also served for a stable for my horses. Whilst here, I received the visit of the Sheikh of the place, a very respectable Osmanli. After sitting with me some time on the shop-board, and talking with apparent interest of the various countries I had visited in the course of my travels, he retired to his harem for the afternoon meal. He did not, however, forget to send me a large dish of pilaf from his own kitchen, with

dates and sweetmeats. After supper, I was visited by his son, a handsome young man, and of very engaging manners, to whom I gave some English gunpowder and flints, acceptable presents in these parts, and indeed the only one I was able to make, in return for the civilities of his father.

April 3.—Return to Antioch.—I had descended the eastern side of the mountain of Beilan (Mount Armanus), and had advanced some distance into the plain, through which flows the Orontes, when I was overtaken by a storm;—such as occur frequently in these parts, at the breaking up of the winter, and just before the weather settles down into an uninterrupted serenity of five or six months' continuance. Fortunately, I was enabled to reach in time a ruined bridge over the Kara Sou, or "Black Water," a mountain torrent, which falls into the Orontes. Here, whilst I was taking shelter under one of the arches, the rain fell in torrents all around me, accompanied with terrific lightning, and the loudest thunder I ever heard. My horse became exceedingly restive, and to complete my embarrassment, the bed of the river deepening at every moment, I was threatened to be driven from the only asylum which chance had thrown in my way.

The storm was of short duration; but my troubles did not end with it. In the marshy part of the plain, there are the remains of a paved causeway leading to the city, but at present in

such a dilapidated state as to be almost impassable. Whenever I attempted to quit it, such as it was, my horse sunk up to his knees in the mire, and threatened to ingulf himself and his rider in a morass. In travelling through these beautiful regions, one is struck with the magnificence of some of the khans, aqueducts, and other works of public utility, denoting a state of great prosperity and high civilization, which every where present themselves; but though these monuments, at the present day, exhibit the marks of a long-standing neglect, no timely repairs are made, and the work of destruction is allowed to continue, as if they belonged to no one, and that the soil was bereft of its rightful owners.

The ancient town of Antioch, of which the modern village of Antaki is the humble representative, previous to the Macedonian conquest, was called Riblath; but being chosen by Seleucus Nicator, one of Alexander's generals, to be the seat of his future government, and being greatly embellished by him, it received the name of Antioch, from respect to his father, Antiochus. For several centuries it was the residence of the Syro-Macedonian kings, and afterwards of the Roman governors of this province. Vespasian, Titus, and other emperors, granted to it very great privileges. There were several cities in the East which bore the same name, but only two of them are mentioned in Scripture; viz., Antiochia

Pisidia, a town of Asia Minor, and the one now under notice: the latter is frequently mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, and here the disciples of Christ were, by divine appointment, first called by the name of their Master and Lord. In later times, it was styled the "Eye of the Eastern Church." Being repaired by the Emperor Justinian, A.D. 529, it was called Theopolis, or "the City of God," on account, it is said, of the inhabitants being mostly Christians, attracted hither, no doubt, by the peculiar liberty they enjoyed in the exercise of their religion. This liberty, it appears, was a remnant of the *jus civitatum*, or "right of citizenship," which Seleucus had given to the Jews (of whom the former were considered as a sect), in common with the Greeks. Their church was long governed by illustrious prelates.

The recollection of these privileges, and of its former ecclesiastical importance, came upon me with redoubled poignancy on this great solemnity (Easter Day), as I compared it with its present forlorn state:—the few Christians (Greeks) who reside here now, not being allowed a temple within the city walls, perform divine service in a grotto, about half a mile from the town! The ravine in which it is situated, was, during my stay in Antioch, the favourite walk of every day;—partly owing to the circumstance just mentioned, for in the morning, I was sure of meeting on this road

some persecuted Christian, returning from his devotions; and partly to admire the stupendous works of nature on this side, still further strengthened by the daring hand of man,—the scene of many a sanguinary conflict between Saracen and Crusader, each for the triumph of his religion. Alas! the "defenced city," she that ranked third amidst all the provinces of Rome, now lies stretched "silent and in darkness," a mass of undistinguishable ruin, lifeless, yet beautiful in death.

CHAPTER XVI.

Visit to the supposed Site of the Grove of Daphne—Fountain of Zoiba—Suedieh—Ruins of Seleucia—Djebel Okrab, or Mount Cassius—Excursions in the Valley of the Orontes—Picturesque Scenery on its Banks—Departure from Antioch—Halt for the Night at Beit-el-Ma—El Ourdi—State of Roads in the Mountains—Night spent with the Anzeyrys—A Syrian Family—Meeting with a Caravan—Fanatical Turks—Wady Kandil, or "Vale of the Lamp"—Arrival at Latakia.

April 6.—Daphne.—This morning I set out upon a visit to the supposed site of the celebrated Grove of Daphne. Authors and travellers do not all agree with respect to the precise position and extent of the grove; but as the suburb of this name lay to the southward of Antioch, it is to be presumed that the grove, with the temples and fountains that adorned it, existed somewhere in this direction. In the "Jerusalem Itinerary," the palace of Daphne is placed five miles from

Antioch, in the way to Latakia. At this distance, and on this road, the traveller, after passing along the foot of the mountains, through groves of myrtle and mulberry trees, arrives at a place called Beit-el-Ma, "the House of Water." Here, at the northern end of a semicircular valley, opening towards the Orontes, several copious sources of water are seen issuing from beneath some rocks, with prodigious force and noise, at a few yards from one another. After turning several mills, they unite below them, and fall in a double cascade down towards the Orontes. It appears that a portion of the waters were formerly conveyed to the city in a subterraneous aqueduct, as the latter may still be traced to within the vicinity of Antioch.

These are pointed out as the sources of the celebrated fountain of antiquity, which contributed so essentially to the luxuriant growth of the Grove, first planted by Seleucus, the Syrian monarch, for the embellishment of his capital; but which, subsequently, from the licentious voluptuousness which reigned within its precincts, proved so fatal to the Roman veterans.* Immediately above them are the foundations of an ancient edifice, perhaps the temple of Apollo. The superstructure, which is of a more modern date, and built with the materials of the original

* See Appendix, No. 33.

building, was probably a Christian church, erected to purify this seat of idolatry and licentiousness. To the same zeal of the primitive Christians we may probably account for the disappearance of the consecrated bay-trees* for which this place was famous, and for which their heathen predecessors had a sort of religious veneration. At the southern extremity of the valley, where are other smaller sources, the hanging grounds are covered with a rich vegetation: the plane-trees, in particular, grow here to an enormous size, and afford a delicious retreat during the heat of the day. The small village of Douaire lies imbosomed amongst them.

If this be the real site of Daphne, even in its present neglected state, an advantageous idea may still be formed of the original grove, when it was nurtured by art and adorned with temples, statues, and the architectural embellishments peculiar to those times. It is for the reader to complete, in his imagination, the picture of this once celebrated seat of debauchery. On my way back to Antioch, and within a short mile from the city, I turned up into the hills lying to the east of the road, to visit another copious fountain, called Zoiba. The source of these waters is high up in the mountain, and in their descent to the plain over huge rocks,

* The nymph Daphne was here turned into the laurus or bay.

that seem to have been rolled down by some great convulsion of nature, they form some very beautiful cascades, and occasionally natural baths for the nymphs and naiads of the imagination. It is altogether a delightful spot, and much resorted to by the inhabitants, being well adapted, from its seclusion and the wild scenery that surrounds it, to the calm and contemplative minds of an eastern population.

April 7.—This morning I set out for Suedieh, situated in a plain five hours and a half south-west of Antioch, and one from the sea. The road to it is over a country slightly undulated, and crossed occasionally by streams falling from the mountains to the north, and running towards the Orontes. The most considerable of these torrents is that called Kara Son, about halfway from Antioch to the coast. Suedieh is a large straggling village, or rather a collection of hamlets, under one name, inhabited by Christian fellahs, and some few Anzeyry families, but no Mussulmen. Their cottages stand detached from one another, in the midst of fenced enclosures planted with the white mulberry-tree, for the growth of silk. I alighted at the house of Hadj Youçouf Saba, the principal Christian of the place, to whom I had brought letters of introduction, and particularly from Mr. Barker, British Consul at Alexandria. Mr. Barker, at the time he held the same post at Aleppo, had a country-house here, to which he resorted with his

family in the summer months, to enjoy the sea breezes. Notwithstanding his removal to Egypt, he still retains it, with the intention, when he retires from his official duties, to complete the improvements he has begun, and perhaps finish his days on the spot.

The climate of Suedieh is considered very healthy, and, looking at its natural fertility, its proximity to the sea, and other local advantages, I am not surprised at the choice he has made. The house I found sadly out of repair, and the flower-beds choked up with weeds. This was owing to the absence of the owner; but the nursery garden for young fruit-trees, imported from France and England, which required less care, is in a more thriving state. On the slope of the mountain, to the north-west of the house, is a considerable vineyard, containing at least eighty different species of vines, the most esteemed in Europe. The soil and aspect are admirably adapted for their growth, and I regret much not being here at the season of the vintage, to see the result of so laudable an undertaking. A few more such settlers as Mr. Barker, and guided by the same philanthropic views as himself (for it is but justice to say that he is generally esteemed in these parts), and the face of Syria would assume a very different aspect from what it now presents.

April 8.—To the ruins of Seleucia.—Being desirous of visiting the ruins of the ancient Seleucia

Pieriœ, I rode over this morning to the village of Kepse, distant about three-quarters of an hour from Suedieh, and occupying the site of the ancient city. We were apprized of our approach to it, by seeing a number of sepulchral grots excavated in the rock by the road-side, at present tenanted by shepherds and their flocks. Some were arched, like those I had seen at Delphi; others were larger, with apartments, one within the other. We entered the enclosure of the ancient city, by the gate at the south-east side, probably the one that led to Antioch. It is defended by round towers, at present in ruins. The first object that attracted our attention was an artificial channel cut in the rock, by which the city communicated with the sea. It is about fifteen feet wide; the first part, for two hundred and sixty paces in length, and forty in height, is cut under the foot of the mountain—the rest, which is about eight hundred and twenty paces in length, is sunk down from fifteen feet to twenty in the solid rock, open at the top, and ending at the sea. Along the side are several channels, to convey water from the higher parts to the grounds which are to the south of it.

In the plain to the south-west corner of city, there was a fine basin, walled round, for receiving shipping. It communicated by a narrow channel with the sea, but at present it is waterless. To the north of this channel, on a gently-rising

ground, is a tower protecting the port. On the south side of the entrance was another tower, built on a rock: near this a pier runs into the sea about sixty-seven paces long, and eighteen paces wide. It is constructed of very large stones; some of them twenty feet long, by six in width. They were fastened together with iron cramps, the marks of which still remain. A little way to the north of this is another pier, one hundred and twenty paces long, and fifteen broad.

The city was built by Seleucus Nicator, soon after he had vanquished Antigonus, "at a time when he was not settled in his kingdom." Of the magnificent temples and buildings mentioned by Polybius, some remains of pillars are alone standing, to gratify the curiosity of the antiquarian traveller; but recollecting, as I sat alone on a stone seat, at the jetty head, that it was from hence Paul and Barnabas, the harbingers of Christianity to the West, when sent forth from the church at Antioch, embarked for Cyprus;—the place all at once assumed an interest, that heathen relics were little calculated to inspire. It came opportunely also; for I felt particularly depressed, at the sight of a large maritime city, once echoing with the voices of thousands, now without an inhabitant; a port formerly containing rich laden galleys, at present choked up with reeds; and, finally, a quay, on which, for centuries, anxious mariners paced up and down throughout the day, at this moment

without a living creature moving on its weather-beaten surface but myself.

From this place, I crossed over the plain southwards, about four miles, towards the mouth of the Orontes. The sands washed up here are so very fine that I was induced to bathe, notwithstanding the early period of the season. To judge from the height at which the water-mark has been left, the westerly winds, to which this coast is exposed, must in winter blow with great violence. There is a bar at the mouth of the river, the greatest depth of which is not more than four feet, and boats are often swamped in attempting to cross it. The entrance is marked out by the whitened tomb of a Turkish santon.

Djebel Okrab (Mount Cassius), on the south side of the river, appears from this spot to great advantage, rising abruptly from the sea, to the height of between five and six thousand feet, and terminating in a sharp peak. Its lower part is cultivated, but towards the top it is gray, and bare of trees; from whence it derives its name, Okrab, meaning, in Arabic, "bald." From the mouth of the river, I ascended the right bank, till I came to a large basin, which, I was told, was the ancient port of Antioch. It is about a mile from the sea.

Close to it are some huts, and a stone building, called the Custom-house; but the collectors' fees at this moment cannot be very considerable, there not being a single vessel in the river.

April 9.—Wishing to make an excursion in the neighbourhood of Suedieh, I set out this morning with my friend Youçouf Saba, and, taking a north-west direction, in three quarters of an hour, came to the fountain called Ayn Huder Bey, the waters of which contribute so materially to the fertility and riches of Suedieh. The situation is extremely picturesque, and the road to it highly interesting from the varied scenery which at every step it unfolds. At two hours from Suedieh, I reached. after a difficult ascent over a rocky road, Babyla, probably a corruption of St. Babylas, situated on the brow and summit of a hill. Half an hour further is Betias Molias, where are the ruins of a Christian convent of the early ages, built in a style of unusual magnificence. The situation is extremely beautiful, and the view very extensive. A copious fountain of excellent water gushes out from under some rocks close by, and falls in pretty cascades into the valley below. Here we alighted and spent the greater part of the day, enjoying one of the most beautiful prospects it is possible to conceive.

Towards evening, descending into the valley below, we came to a village in which are the remains of another large church, called Hannah-el-dahab (St. John of Chrysostom), or "golden mouth." In a ravine close by, watered by a winter torrent, I observed some of the largest walnut-trees I ever beheld, together with some stately poplars. The

peasantry appeared to be a fine healthy race, and independent in their deportment. The women here are distinguished by the immense quantity of ancient silver coins they wear in the plaits of their hair. Turkish is the language that is generally spoken in these districts.

April 10.—Return to Antioch.—In one hour I reached the banks of the Orontes, and near the place where, issuing from the mountains, it enters the plain, previous to emptying itself finally into the sea, two miles from hence. At this last stage of its course, though not very wide, it is a fine, deep, and steady flowing river; and navigable for vessels of about one hundred tons burden. There being no bridge, we crossed it in a ferry-boat, the head of which being connected by an iron ring to a rope made fast to either bank, we had nothing to do but to slide ourselves along it, without the assistance of a boatman: nevertheless, as the boat was small, and my horses, though blindfolded, unaccustomed to the motion, we could only do so one at a time, consequently the passage was both tedious and dangerous.

On reaching the opposite shore, we commenced ascending the left bank of the stream, and, in a quarter of an hour, entered a mountain pass of surprising beauty. For more than two hours from hence, the Orontes is seen flowing between a double line of high hills, winding and turning incessantly, as the ground over which it passes,

presents obstacles to its free course,—though enabling it thereby, to distribute alternately to either side, the fertilizing powers of its waters. In this interval, the road is naturally subject to the caprices of the river. At times it lies along its banks, and is then over a soil of a dark red colour, contrasting pleasingly with the surrounding verdure. At others, where the passage is straightened by the nearer approach of the stream, it is a narrow footpath, leading the traveller over high and rugged rocks, with frightful abysses opening at his feet. Occasionally the river flows majestically along the base of a perpendicular cliff, several hundred feet high, having vast chasms in its sides, that add a singular wildness to the scene. In these parts, the valley is generally wider than in others, and there are consequently some small green levels fit for cultivation. These are planted with mulberry-trees and vines, and here and there a cottage is seen peeping from amongst them.

But nature is more apparent than art in this picturesque valley, and nowhere, indeed, in my long course of travel, have I seen her beauties lavished with so bountiful a hand. It is hardly within the reach of language to convey an adequate idea of the luxuriant variety of foliage which presents itself on every side. Besides the rich green myrtle and laurel, mixed up with the wild vine, the bay-tree, arbutus, plane-tree, and sycamore

are scattered about in all directions. But it was not the eye alone that was charmed. The fruit-trees, which here are very abundant, were now in full blossom, and sent forth an agreeable fragrance as we passed along; and, to complete the gratification of the senses, the occasional shallows of the river kept up a perpetual murmur, which soothed the ear, and more than once invited us to repose. One single regret mingled itself with our pleasures, viz.: that, owing to its distance from our homes, we could not hope to make it the object of our frequent pilgrimage.

At two hours from the western entrance of the pass, the mountains on the right bank of the river suddenly dwindle into comparative insignificance, and shortly after, the view opens again to the plain of Souedié, bounded on the north by the range called Djebel Akhomar. The Kara Sou, or "Black Water," a term rather characteristic of its dark stony bed, than of the quality of its waters, which are peculiarly transparent, falls into the river Orontes, nearly opposite to this spot, coming from the latter mountains. To the right of the road is a fine fountain called Semanié, and a general halting-place for travellers. Here we alighted to refresh.

In the afternoon, we remounted our horses, and following the path along the hills which overlook the Orontes, in three hours we reached Antioch, making a total of seven from Suedieh. The road

we took on our return this day is nearly two miles more than the straight one across the plain, and is therefore little frequented; but it will be seen, that we had every reason to be gratified with our journey, for which we were indebted to the suggestions of Mr. Barker and other friends.

April 13.—To Latakia.—Owing to my frequent excursions in Antioch and its environs, my nationality, in spite of my dress, soon became known, and I was greeted at every step with the opprobrious epithet of Djaour (infidel). Aware of the intolerant spirit of the inhabitants, and the impossibility of getting redress in case of insult or injury, and, unwilling to expose myself to a recurrence of the scenes which took place on my way from Tripoli to Damascus, I declined taking a guide from amongst them, trusting to find one in one of the neighbouring villages. My saddle-bags, therefore, were thrown across the horses' backs, and led out of the town by my servant, Antoun, whilst I followed on foot, at some little distance in the rear, to escape notice. In two hours I reached Beit-el-Ma, distant about five or six miles from Antioch.

To my great disappointment, I found that the millers, having done their day's work, had left the mills, and retired to their homes, at a village at some little distance. Night coming on, the only alternative was to take temporary possession

of the premises. This we did, but without violence, the door having been left open; but we took the precaution ourselves of closing it, by placing a bar across it in the inside. Antoun was not long in making a fire, and cooking a supper. I slept soundly, notwithstanding the deafening noise occasioned by the rushing of the water through the sluices, and the natural apprehension of unwelcome visiters from without.

April 14.—At break of day, as we were in the act of saddling our horses, the millers appeared on the brink of the valley, coming down to their morning's work. As soon as they perceived us, they made a sudden halt. We beckoned to them to approach; but they hesitated a moment, till our peaceable attitude inspired them with confidence. After explaining the cause of the liberty we had taken, and giving them a handsome contribution, I induced one of them to accompany me with his mule, to carry my luggage, and to serve me as a guide to Latakia. At eight o'clock all was in readiness. On quitting the mills, the first part of the route for four hours, lay over a hilly country, unenlivened by any object of interest. At noon, I descended into a picturesque valley, in which stands a well-built village, called Sheikh Keuy, with a large khan, and a fountain of excellent water. Passing through the village, and continuing to descend, we halted at the end of an

hour, unloaded the mule, turned the horses out to grass, and refreshed ourselves by the side of a rivulet.

At two o'clock we resumed our journey. Ascending a steep hill by a winding path, we came out upon an elevated *plateau*, on which a quantity of horned cattle were pasturing; at the southern end was a small lake. From this we descended into a rich vale, lying to the southward of Djebel Okrab. It was sunset when I reached El Ourdi (ancient Bacchais), a large village, the inhabitants of which are fellahs, or cultivators of the surrounding lands. I alighted at the house of the Greek Papas, or El Houri, as they are called in Arabic. It being the Lent of the Christians, I found the poor man sadly out of humour, and I almost lost my own equanimity, on sitting down to a sorry meal of yaghourt, caviar, and dry olives.

After supper, mattresses were strewed upon the floor, the whole family, men, women, and children, sleeping in the same room, and by the side of one another. It is true, they only took off their outer garments, but there are other inconveniences attending this *pêle-mêle* way of living, that would revolt the delicacy of an European newly arrived. With me, who, for the last two years, had seldom passed many nights together, in the same room, or in the same fashion, the sharper points of my sensitiveness had become blunted by hard fare;

and, provided I was not annoyed by the insect tribe, or by confined air, I slept quite as well dressed or undressed, on the ground or on a feather bed. The room was partially lighted by a small lamp burning before the picture of the Virgin, in the further corner from the door; and several times, on awaking in the night, I sat up, contemplating the strange bedfellows, and still stranger mode of life, that my travelling propensities had made me acquainted with.

April 15.—It rained so hard, and so incessantly this morning, that I was unable to get under way till towards noon, when the weather cleared up, and the sun shone forth with great brilliancy. Soon after we left El Ourdi, we commenced ascending a range of low hills stretching from Djebel Okrab to the south-east. They are nearly all of the same height, but very abrupt, touching one another at their bases. But this uniformity is not perceived by the eye, their summits and sides being clothed with pines. It is only observable in the absence of any thing like a level path for twenty yards together, making it very fatiguing for the horses, particularly when heavily laden, as was the case with ours. The roads, or rather mountain paths, over which we passed, were dreadfully cut up by the late rains, and the torrents, in some places, were quite formidable. Owing to these accumulated difficulties we deemed it prudent not to proceed any further this day. Accordingly, at

the end of five hours' journey from El Ourdi, we turned out of the road to the right, to reach a small village, called El Haki, which we found to be inhabited exclusively by Anzeyrys. It was rather a bold undertaking to commit oneself to their protection, as they are reputed not to be over scrupulous in their conduct towards travellers; but the frankness of my proceeding seemed to prepossess them in my favour.

I alighted at the house of the chief of the village, a fine, handsome young man, who admitted me into his family more like a friend than a stranger. Besides being exempt from prejudices on the score of religion, there was about his conduct, a degree of candour and good-heartedness, that quite captivated me after the distant manners of the Turks. A supper was prepared for us, as good as could be expected at so short a notice. I slept in the same room as himself, his wife, daughter, and servant. In the summer months, and to avoid the mosquitoes, they sleep out in the open air, on platforms raised some ten or fifteen feet from the ground, and supported by four upright poles, the ascent to which is by a ladder drawn up at night.

April 16.—My host finding I was fond of the chase, pressed me to stop with him a few days, assuring me that there were a great many wild boars in the neighbourhood; but I was too anxious to reach Latakia to be able to accept his friendly in-

vitation. At breakfast, which consisted of a large basin of milk, I ate, for the first time, bread in which celery was baked. The butter was the best I had ever tasted; the pasturage about here being excellent.

On leaving El Haki, our route lay, for a short time, through a continuation of the forest, we entered the preceding day. Under any other circumstances, the ride through the romantic scenery it afforded would have been highly agreeable, but the consciousness of insecurity, on this occasion, robbed solitude of its charms. At the end of two hours, we met with a small caravan of fanatical Turks, who pretended to be excessively indignant, at the superior elegance of dress, and style of travelling, of a Christian dog over themselves: they even went so far as to ask me why I presumed to carry arms of defence, and against whom they were destined. I was on the point of answering them as my outraged feelings dictated, when a heavy shower coming on, an end was put to the altercation; each party respectively seeking shelter—they from the rain, and I from their unprovoked attack.

At the end of three hours, we came to the brink of the Wady Kandil (the Vale of the Lamp), through which the river of this name serpentines towards the sea. I know not from whence this appellation is derived; but, looking down upon it from this height,—the bottom of the valley covered

with a rich coat of verdure, and the sun's rays reflected from the pebbly bed of the stream,—we thought it resembled rather a huge serpent basking in the grass. In our way to the coast we crossed it nearly a dozen times, and always with great difficulty, from its swollen state. The Wady Kandil is a charming valley: its sides are beautifully clothed with forest-trees of every kind. Approaching Latakia, we passed by the village of Besneada, situated on a gentle eminence in the plain. The air here is delightful, and many of the European families of the town have country residences in the neighbourhood, to which they retire in the summer months.

In one hour from hence we entered Latakia.

CHAPTER XVII.

Latakia—Instance of Mussulman Honesty—Description of the Town—The Marina, or Port—Its Mussulman and Greek Population—Its Trade and Resources—Rigid Observance of Lent by the Greeks—Antiquities—Necropolis—Climate—Turkish Recklessness—Environs of Latakia—Promenades—Oriental Recreation—Family of M. Mouça Elias, the British Agent—His Kindness to the Author—Interior of an Eastern Harem—The Author's Adieu to Syria, and Departure for Cyprus.

LATAKIA.—I had brought with me letters of introduction to M. Mouça Elias, a Christian merchant, and accredited British Agent at this port. Accordingly, there being no inn to alight at, I proceeded direct to his house, with the intention of procuring, through his means, a comfortable lodging in the town; but this he would not consent to, and I was induced to accept his kind offer of a room in his own house.

On leaving Aleppo, I had committed to the care of the conductor of a small caravan, a rouleau of sequins, to the value of about fifty pounds, with instructions to deliver them to M. Elias at Latakia.

I had taken no receipt from the man, for, in commercial matters, a Mussulman's word, given in the presence of another, is as good as his bond. By finding my money safely delivered, I was agreeably convinced of the noted honesty of these people, to whom large sums are frequently confided.

April 18.—This morning I had a return of intermittent fever, which rather surprised me at this early period of the year; but I attributed it to the fatigue and inclemencies I had been exposed to on the journey from Antioch. I had been left free from its attacks since my tour in the Haouran.

April 19.—I took advantage of the interval of liberty, which my malady allowed me, to visit the town of Latakia. It stands on the northern edge of an elevated tongue of land, called Cape Ziaret, which advances about half a league beyond the line of coast. It was formerly a walled town, but it is now an open one; consequently, there is more space allowed for building on than if it had been fortified. In the new quarter, which is to the north-east, the houses stand in the midst of gardens and plantations, enclosed by high walls. Almost all the houses are flat-roofed, the inhabitants being accustomed to sleep on their terraces, during the hot summer months, as at Aleppo and other parts of the East.

Latakia appears to be subject to earthquakes: in many parts of the town, I observed large fissures in the walls, and immense stones displaced by some

violent concussion: that of 1822 was the most destructive. From this cause, and its declining commerce, we may attribute its gradual depopulation, it being reduced from twenty to about six or seven thousand souls. Of these, a large proportion are Mussulmen, and noted for their bigotry and intolerant spirit. Besides eight or ten mosques which they have in the town, they have begun building another, on a hill to the east of it. It is still in an unfinished state, but to judge from its architecture and costly materials, it will not be surpassed in beauty by any thing of the kind in this part of Syria. It is so unusual to see a new mosque erecting in these declining days of Islamism, that I inquired the cause of one of the workmen. He conducted me to the sepulchre of one Mahommed, a native of the Barbary States, who died here a few years ago, having obtained a great reputation for sanctity throughout the country.

The monks of the Terra Santa have a small establishment here, but only one of their order resides in it, the congregation consisting merely of a few Maronites, and three or four French families settled here in business. The other Christians are of the Greek Church.

April 20.—Laid up with fever.

April 21.—The port of Latakia, called the Scala or Marina, is a distinct town from the upper one, being separated from it by a distance of about half

a mile, the intervening space being occupied by gardens and enclosed plantations. It consists of a double street, running parallel to the shore, and another leading down to it from the town, having its coffee-houses, and other places of resort with seafaring people. The haven itself is a small basin with a narrow entrance, shallow, but well sheltered except to the westward. If the mud and sand, which have been allowed to accumulate, were cleared out, vessels of one hundred and fifty or two hundred tons, might enter and discharge at the quays; but this is far too great an enterprise for the present rulers of the country. On the north side of the entrance is a ruined castle, standing on a rock connected with the main land by arches. On the southern side are the remains of the ancient wall which encompassed it. At its eastern extremity, is the custom-house and the landing-place; at this part is an artificial indenture into the cliff, perhaps a basin for building and repairing of ships in ancient times.

The chief exports of Latakia are tobacco, grown in the Anzeyry mountains east of the town, cotton and raw silk, the produce of the neighbouring plain. But such are the limited transactions of this place, and the other ports of Syria, that European vessels of two or three hundred tons can seldom meet with an entire cargo in any one port, unless chartered for the purpose. They commence taking in goods at Beirout, and so call in at the

several ports on the coast, as far north as Iskenderoun, by which much time is lost, and great additional expense incurred. The imports are, rice from Egypt, wine from Cyprus, and assorted goods, principally hardware from England.

April 22.—Again laid up with fever.

April 23.—This being my Saint's day, and that of the patron of England, I was visited by such of the inhabitants as I had become acquainted with since my arrival at Latakia.

Sunday, April 24.—Easter-day, according to the Greek calendar. The long rigorous fast the Greeks had observed for the last forty days now ceased, to the great satisfaction of all of that communion. Soon after midnight the family of M. Elias rose, and went to church to hear mass, it being with them the greatest festival in the year. On their return to the house, they sat down to an early meal, in which meat, of which they had been so long deprived, was of course the principal dish. If it is common to hear of persons injuring themselves by too strict an observance of Lent, it is not unusual to hear of others falling ill from an over indulgence in food, when the restriction is withdrawn, as on the present occasion. On walking out this morning, I observed all the Christians as they met one another in the streets embrace, and repeat to one another the words, Χριστος ἀνέστη, "Christ is risen"—a practice I am told of very high antiquity.

April 25.—The bazaars of Latakia are poor and insignificant, and bear ample testimony to the declining trade of the place. The only article exposed for sale, which particularly attracted my notice, was the tobacco, of which I have already spoken. This part of the country, as well as Djebail, which lies to the southward, is noted for producing the best tobacco in Syria. It is celebrated all over the Levant, but more particularly in Egypt, where it is principally consumed; whereas the Salonica tobacco, so highly prized at Constantinople, scarcely meets with a sale in Egypt. The dark colour which distinguishes it from the common plant, is produced by the smoke of a species of wood called *hezez*, which is burnt under it, as it hangs suspended to the ceiling, to give it a flavour.

April 28.—Latakia, or Ladekié, as it is called by the natives, is the representative of the ancient Laodicea, so named by Seleucus Nicator; its founder, in honour of his mother. It was called Laodicea ad Mare, to distinguish it from other towns of this name in the interior. Its early history is involved in some obscurity. In the time of the Crusades, it played a less important part than the other cities of this coast, being further removed from the Holy Land, so long the object of contention between Christians and Infidels. There are still, however, some few remains of the ancient city.

Of these, the most remarkable is a triumphal gate, standing in the south-east corner of the modern town, in the direction of the road to Tripoli. From being surrounded with other buildings, its details are seen with difficulty; but it appears to be tolerably well preserved. Each of its faces presents a fine arch, adorned with pillars and pilasters of the Corinthian order; above which is a low pediment, with a sculptured soffit, and a frieze ornamented with military trophies. It was probably erected in honour of some Roman Emperor, perhaps Septimus Severus, who was a native of Syria. At no great distance from the arch, in the way towards the port, are four Corinthian columns, with their architraves in good preservation: they perhaps formed part of a portico to some other ancient building. In a street leading to the bazaars is a range of low pillars, of gray granite, apparently of great antiquity, but their intercolumniations having been built up, it is impossible to guess at their original destination. In a garden in the centre of the town, we were shown a marble pillar reversed, upon which is a long Greek inscription nearly effaced.

Other relics perhaps still remain concealed under the mounds of earth and rubbish which are met with in every quarter. Indeed, the ruins of the ancient city offer ready building-materials to the modern inhabitants. On the south-east of

the town is a hill, called Sahioun, nearly a mile in length, with a tabular summit, partly covered with olive plantations. Here stood the Acropolis; of which, however, nothing remains beyond a few wells and cisterns. To the north-west, near the sea, was the ancient Necropolis, or "City of the Dead." A vast number of sepulchres, hewn out of the rock, are here laid open, the descent to which is by steps.

April 27.—The air of Latakia is considered very wholesome. Its situation is less confined than that of other cities on this coast. Here the mountains are further removed from the sea, and towards the north the plain opens to a great extent. The water, however, is bad; that which the inhabitants drink is brought by an aqueduct from a great distance. As I was walking with a friend amongst the plantations lying near the port, some Albanian soldiers, who had just landed from Acre, commenced, by way of amusement, discharging their muskets in the air, right and left, and in order to increase the report, loaded them with ball. We had wellnigh become victims of their recklessness; for it was only by lying down under a wall, we escaped the bullets that whistled over our heads. In this inconvenient posture, and still more unpleasant state of anxiety, we remained for nearly half an hour, not daring to rise up until the firing had ceased.

During the fortnight I spent under the hospi-

table roof of M. Mouça Elias, I was treated as one of the family. I required these delicate attentions on their part, for I was labouring under fever, which, without being dangerous, confined me to the house every second day, so that I was unable to extend my excursions far into the interior. The part of the house assigned to me was a tower at one angle of the court, the ascent to which was by the stone staircase outside. It overlooked some gardens, and commanded a view of the sea. Having brought with me my "*batterie de cuisine*," my servant Antoun cooked my meals for me, an arrangement my friends assented to, as it happened to be the Greek Lent, when no meat is allowed them whatever. My evenings were all spent with the family. It consists of his lady, his two sons, and three daughters. With the young men, when well, I sauntered about in the neighbourhood; sometimes on horseback, sometimes on foot.

The environs of Latakia, owing to the undulated ground that encompasses it, particularly to the east and the south, being every where clothed with the richest vegetation, are noted for their amenity. From every little elevation one may catch a bird's-eye view of the sea, and inhale the breezes that come up from it. Of an afternoon, as the sun declines, picturesque groups begin to crown the neighbouring heights, and, by the time it sinks into the far west, the whole population has evacuated the

city. Their amusements on these occasions are confined, on the part of the Turks, to the silent contemplation of the beauties of nature;—with the Christians, to conversation and innocent mirth. They are seldom seen in direct communication with one another.

When sickness obliged me to remain at home, I was visited by M. Elias's lady and her daughters, who, it is no exaggeration to say, rank among the prettiest women in Syria. They are still very young, the eldest not being more than sixteen or seventeen. Nothing can be more *piquant* than the innocence of their manners. Throughout the early part of the day, when each is occupied with her share of the household duties, such as cooking, washing, and the like, unconscious of any impropriety, they walk about the house in slippers, with naked feet, bare arms, and other indications of a state of dishabille. In the afternoon, when the work of the day is done, and they are arrayed in their best costumes, with their beautiful hair falling in plaits over their shoulders, to see them reclining on the soft cushions of the divan, with an air of indescribable grace, and, at the same time, unstudied voluptuousness, I could scarcely bring myself to believe that these were the same young persons whom I had noticed, but a few hours before, busy in the drudgery of the *ménage*. Yet such is the interior of every house in the East, and such are

the occupations of the women of the harem, alternately the mistresses and slaves of the owner.

Nine P.M.—The moment of taking final leave, for I had more than once said adieu, at length arrived; and seldom was a separation more painful to me. I was leaving a country where I had spent some of the happiest days of my life, in all probability never to return to it more; and I was quitting a family that had loaded me with kindness, without the prospect of meeting them elsewhere, to requite the services I had received at their hands. I had engaged the vessel, that was to take me to Cyprus, ten days before; but want of resolution prevented me from embarking until this evening.

Being told that the horses and baggage were on board, I stole out of the house, and proceeded down to the port. A land breeze sprung up as we raised the anchor, and opened the sails of our little *tartane*. It carried us gently out of the port. As we retired from the shore, I watched, with a heavy heart, the different lights which appeared at the windows of houses,—the owners of which were known to me,—until, one after the other, all were extinguished, and nothing remained for the eye to rest upon, but the dark and indistinct features of the coast.

END OF SYRIA.

APPENDIX.

Note 1, page 5.

"BERYTUS probably received its name from the wells with which it abounds. Accordingly, Stephanus Byzantinus says that the Phœnicians themselves thus accounted for the origin of the name:—'Βήρ γὰρ τὸ φρέαρ παὰ ἄυτοις,'—for, with them, '*beer*' signifies a well. The original word was therefore either in Hebrew *beeroth*, or in Arabic *birath*, 'wells.'" (Drummond's Origines.) The origin of these wells may probably be deduced from the circumstance, that there is no good spring water to be found in the immediate vicinity of Beirout, a fact I find noticed by several of the early travellers. Augustus made it a Roman Colony, calling it after his daughter, and adding the epithet Felix, probably from its happy situation: it was henceforward known under the appellation of Berytus Colonia Julia Felix.—(Plin. Nat. Hist. vol. 17.) It is not included in the borders of the Holy Land though it is supposed to be referred to in Scripture.

Note 2, page 6.

I need, I believe, scarcely remind the reader, that the person here spoken of is the distinguished officer and

enterprising traveller now engaged in the "Expedition on the Euphrates;" and that whatever is to be attained by superior intelligence, indefatigable perseverance, and undaunted courage, may be expected at his hands. At the same time, the difficulties to be encountered are of no common kind, being rather of a moral than a physical nature, and arising principally from a systematic opposition to all attempts at improvement, on the part of the barbarous hordes that encompass the theatre of his investigations; and therefore it is to be feared, that little more will be derived from his arduous undertaking, than the resolving of a few geographical and astronomical desiderata. As a safe and early means of communication with our Indian possessions, it is probable that the route by Egypt will be the one definitively adopted by those interested in their prosperity.

Note 3, page 9.

This remarkable appendage to the dress of the female Druse, which has given rise to so many conjectures amongst the learned, from a supposed analogy to the Lingam and the Phallus, does not appear from the "catechism" (see next page) to have been an object either of religion or curiosity.

Note 4, page 10.

A singular document, entitled "Catechism of the Doctrines of the Religion of the Druses, inhabitants of Mount Lebanon, and of the other parts of Syria, translated into English from an Italian verbal translation, made from the Arabic, 13th June, 1830, by Basilius, Bishop of Sidon (Tsaida)," was recently forwarded to the author by Dr. Meryon, formerly attached to Lady

Hester Stanhope's establishment, and now residing at Marseilles. The arrival of such a stock of original information (it covers thirteen folio pages of closely written manuscript), upon a subject hitherto involved in mystery, was hailed by him with great delight, and he would willingly have availed himself of the permission of his friend to add it to this work, had not its extreme length prevented the possibility of carrying his wishes into effect. An attentive reading of the manuscript, however, has conducted him to the following conclusions:

The religion of the Druses professes a secrecy, which seems unnecessary, except for the sake of imposture. They believe in the transmigration of souls, but more as a punishment in this world than in the next, and that the Prophets recorded in the Old Testament, were only a succession of identical spirits. The names of David, Abraham, Ismael, and Pythagoras, occur in their sacred code, but without any adherence to our own ascertained chronology. Hamsa is the name of their God and Sovereign, whom they consider to have been the true Christ, and Jesus, the son of Joseph, a travelling impostor, and therefore deservedly crucified. They seem equally averse to Mahommedans and Christians, and they use the Koran more as a blind than a belief, simply to deceive their Turkish masters. They consider the four Evangelists to have been so many powers or parts of religion, and Hamsa to have appeared about 400 years after Mahommed, when he flourished eight years upon earth, and afterwards appeared seven times in all from the time of Adam, finally and formidably to appear when the Christians shall be more

powerful than the Turks; he will then spread the religion of the Druses by divine authority. Their creed requires implicit obedience, and rejects fasting, prayers, tithes, and the killing of animals.

Note 5, page 25.

According to Burckhardt, it is now about 150 years since the government of the mountain has been always intrusted by the Pashas of Acre and Tripoli to an individual of the family of Shehab, to which the Emir Beshir belongs. His family derive their origin from Mecca, where its name is known, in the history of Mahommed, and the first Caliphs. They emigrated from the Hedjaz about the time of the crusades, and first settled in a village of the Haouran, to which they gave their family name; and which is still known by the appellation of Shohba. Being noble, or of Emir origin, they were considered to be proper persons to be governors of the mountain; for it was, and still is thought necessary that the government should not be in the hands of a Druse. The Druses being always divided into parties, a governor chosen from among them would have involved the country in the quarrels of his own party, and he would have been always endeavouring to exterminate his adversaries; whereas a Turk, by carefully managing both parties, maintains a balance between them, though he is never able to overpower them completely. He can oppose the Christian inhabitants to the Druses, who are in much smaller numbers than the former; and thus he is enabled to keep the country in a state of tranquillity, and in subjection to the Pashas. It is, probably, in the view of attaching

the Christians more closely to him, and to oppose them in some measure to the Druses, that the Emir Beshir, with his whole family, has secretly embraced the Christian religion. The Shehab were formerly members of the true Mussulman faith, and they never have had among them any followers of the doctrines of the Druses. They still affect publicly to observe the Mahommedan rites; they profess to fast during the Ramadhan, and the Pashas still treat them as Turks; but it is no longer matter of doubt, that the greater part of the Shehab, with the Emir Beshir at their head, have really embraced Christianity.

Note 6, page 35.

For an account of the distinctive honours shown to the memory of this renowned champion of Christianity, by the Greeks of the Oriental church, and commemorative of this fabled exploit, see the Author's volume on Palestine. He is held in equal veneration by the Turks and Arabs. By the latter he is styled Abd Maaz.

Note 7, page 38.

Whilst the present work was in course of publication, an extremely interesting memoir, entitled "Landseer's Sabæan Researches" (being the subject of a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution), was put into the author's hands, as treating especially of these "most ancient and interesting sculptured monuments." From this document it appears, that the merit of early appreciation of these valuable memorials is principally due to the antiquarian scrutiny of Mr. Joseph Bonomi, a fellow-collegian of the author, who, passing along

these shores in 1832, and carrying with him the "eye and the tact of an artist," was induced to make a halt of several days on the spot, to rescue, if possible, from the hand of time, records likely to elucidate some dark page of Assyrian, Egyptian, or Phœnician history. The result of his labours was a series of accurate drawings of the Egyptian tablets, and a carefully executed cast of the mezzo-relievo figures just described, the whole of which were subsequently transported to England, to be submitted to the researches of philosophical antiquaries.

The learned lecturer, cited above, in discoursing upon these precious materials, renders justice to the artist, for his introspective discovery of the patronymic of Sesostris, as "being a luminous beacon in investigating the relative antiquity of those of the Phœnician monuments, which contain or have contained the arrow-head, or cunieform inscriptions;" assuming that the person generally known under this appellation (probably a heroic cognomen), is identical with Rameses the Second, of Egypt, so celebrated for his various and distant conquests, and who flourished during the period of the Hebrew Theocracy, more than twenty-two centuries ago. (See Manetho, Tacitus, and Josephus.) He then recapitulates, from the concurrent testimony of these veracious authors, the several expeditions of this mighty conqueror, till his arrival at the Bay of Junia, or mouth of the Lycus, where he embarked on board the fleet which accompanied him, crossed over to Kittim, since called Cyprus; whence he infers, that the sculptures in question were commanded by the Egyptian monarch, to serve as lasting

monuments of his expedition into these parts. The basso-relievo he attributes, with the same perspicuity, and by deductions equally happily drawn, to one of the three conquering monarchs of Assyria, who, according to the Bible, to Josephus, and Menander, invaded and exacted tribute from Phœnicia and Samaria, viz., Pul, Pul-Assyr, and Sulman-Assyr, the immediate predecessors of Nebuchadnezzar, who, having subjugated the same country, which had before been subjugated by Sesostris the Great, left unsculptured monuments of their prowess and atrocities (vulgarly called military glory), in imitation of their renowned predecessor; and "for political reasons"—reasons founded on the real or supposed glory of successful warfare—on the same identical rock. For the interpretation of the astronomical signs and symbols, which are clustered in the upper left-hand quadrant of the tablet, the author refers the reader to the Essay itself; as any attempt at abridgment, on his part, would be presumptuous, if not sacrilegious, from the unbroken interest of the original.

Note 8, page 39.

"There is hardly any place less fit for culture than the Kesrouan, yet it has become the most populous part of the country. The satisfaction of inhabiting the neighbourhood of places of sanctity, of hearing church bells, which are found in no other part of Syria, and of being able to give loose to religious feelings, and to rival the Mussulmen in fanaticism, are the chief attractions that have peopled the Kesrouan with Catholic Christians; for the present state of the country offers no

political advantages whatsoever; on the contrary, the extortions of the Druses have reduced the peasant to the most miserable state of poverty, more miserable than that of the eastern plains of Syria; nothing, therefore, but religious freedom induces the Christians to submit to their extortion; added, perhaps, to the pleasure which the Catholics derive from persecuting their brethren of the Greek Church, for the few Greeks who are settled here are not better treated by the Maronites than a Damascene Christian might expect to be by a Turk."—(Burckhardt, page 182.)

Note 9, page 43.

"The roads in these mountains are bad beyond description; indeed, I never before saw any inhabited country so entirely mountainous as the Kesrouan: there are no levels on the tops of the mountain; but the traveller no sooner arrives on the summit, than he immediately begins the descent; and each hill is insulated, so that to reach a place not more than ten minutes distant in a straight line, one is obliged to travel three or four miles, by descending into a valley and ascending again the other side." Thus far Burckhardt, whose testimony is further confirmed by Volney, who thus describes this scenery:—"When the traveller penetrates these mountains, the ruggedness of the roads, the steepness of the declivities, the depth of the precipices, have at first a terrific effect; but the sagacity of the mules which bear him soon inspires him with confidence, and enables him to examine, at his ease, the picturesque scenes which succeed one another, so as almost to bewilder him. There, as among the Alps,

he sometimes travels whole days to arrive at a spot which was in sight when he set out. He turns, he descends, he winds round, he climbs; and under this perpetual change of position, one is ready to think that a magical power is varying at every step the beauties of the landscape."—(Voyage en Syrie, page 268.)

Note 10, page 49.

"The beautiful Adonis, say the mythologists, forsook the couch of Venus to pursue the pleasures of the chase among his native mountains. Jealous of his rival, Mars changed himself into a wild boar, and under the form of that savage animal, lacerated the thigh of the youthful hunter. The grief of Venus was excessive; but her sighs and tears could not avert the fate of her unfortunate lover, and she transformed the expiring youth into a white rose. As the weeping goddess fondly caressed the fragrant flower, her hand was wounded by a thorn, and the leaves were dyed to crimson with her blood. All roses before that time had been white, but the flower that had received its hue from the blood of Venus, soon became the adoration of the world, and the red rose was always afterwards esteemed as the pride of the florist, and as the glory of the garden. In the mean time, the death of the sylvan warrior was told by a thousand voices; the air was rent with the cries of the nymphs of the forests, and hill and valley rang with their lamentations, while the echoes of Lebanon still repeated the name of the loved and the lost Adonis.—"I mourn Adonis; the fair Adonis is dead; dead is the fair Adonis whom the Loves lament." An annual festival was established to

commemorate the fate of the hunter of Lebanon; and the ceremony was celebrated with all the disorder of real affection; the women, clothed in mourning dresses, uttered doleful cries as they passed along, beat their breasts, and gave their dishevelled locks to the wind. An image was borne by the crowd, and this image represented a youth who had expired in the flower of his age. Funeral hymns resounded on every side. The season was that in which the sun, after the autumnal equinox, has descended to the lower hemisphere, and when the yellow leaves have already withered on the half naked boughs. The face of nature is then overcast with gloom, each day comes later, each night comes sooner, and the approach of winter is heralded by the storms of autumn, that blight the gardens and denude the forests. It is then too that the imagination of man is almost always compelled to compare the march of the year with the progress of life; that youth itself often casts an anxious look towards the future, and that age reflects on what has been, and meditates, or ought to meditate, on what must be. The ancients, less artificial than the moderns, were more impressed with the appearances of nature than we are. They mourned the imaginary death of the sun, in the not less fictitious death of Adonis. It was remarked by the Phœnicians, that the stream, near which the fabled hunter of Lebanon was slain, became annually of a red colour at the season when the festival was celebrated in his honour; and the people were pleased with the figment, when the mythologists feigned that the river had received its crimson tint, not from the red earth washed down from the hills by the autumnal rains, but

from the blood which yearly flowed from the wound of the lamented Adonis. The season was felt by the children of nature to be congenial with sorrow; and they were pleased with a fiction which fed and indulged for the moment the grief that they desired should be only transient. Thus the Phœnicians, during the lapse of many ages, continued to mourn at a certain season of the year, the death of Adonis: nor was Adonis any other than a personification of the sun, and the same with Thammioz."—(Drummond's Origines.)

Note 11, page 69.

Maundrell describes them in the following terms:—"It is their principle to adhere to no certain religion, but cameleon-like they put on the colour of religion, whatever it be, which is reflected upon them from the persons with whom they happen to converse; with Christians they profess themselves Christians; with Turks they are good Mussulmen; with Jews they pass for Jews, being such Proteuses in religion, that nobody was ever able to discover what shape or standard their consciences are really of. All that is certain concerning them, is that they make very much and good wine, and are great drinkers."

Note 12, page 72.

Travellers in these unfrequented parts cannot be too circumspect in the choice of the guides who accompany them; indeed, the success of a tour almost depends upon it. Generally speaking those who offer themselves for this purpose are a low, vicious, and unprincipled race; but it sometimes happens that the resi-

dent consul will be answerable for the intelligence and honesty of an individual who has been already employed upon this service. It is too much to expect that the newly-arrived stranger should be acquainted with the language of the country: but it is absolutely necessary that the one used as the means of communication with the natives should be equally possessed by the latter and his interpreter.

Note 13, page 82.

Over the origin of this ancient sect there hangs some measure of the same obscurity that envelops that of the Druses; and the matter has been warmly discussed by ecclesiastical historians. Whatever may have been their previous errors, one thing is laid down as certain, from the testimony of Gulielmus Tyrius (William of Tyre), and other unexceptionable authorities, viz., that having hitherto retained the opinions of the Monotholites (the doctrine of one will in Christ), they abandoned them in the year 1182, and thenceforth were re-admitted to the communion of the Catholic Church. In acknowledging, however, the supremacy of the Pope, their clergy still continue, as formerly, to elect a head, who has the title of *Batrak* (Patriarch) of Antioch. Their priests (curates) are allowed to marry, as in the primitive ages of the church; but it must be to a virgin, not a widow. Like the other clergy of the East, they live partly on the offerings of their congregations, and partly by the labour of their own hands, and are held in great respect by their flocks. Whoever meets them, poor or rich, great or small, hastens to kiss their hands, and they are ill pleased when any one abstains from

this mark of esteem. At the period alluded to above, they had 40,000 men capable of bearing arms. Their situation was tolerably peaceful under the Mamelukes. This tranquillity was disturbed by Selim II.; but that Prince, occupied with more serious cares, did not take the trouble to subjugate them. This negligence gave them confidence; and, in concert with the Druses, and their Emir, the celebrated Fakhr-e-Din, they made daring inroads upon the Ottomans. But these movements had a disastrous issue. Amurath III., having sent against them Ibrahim, Pasha of Cairo, that General reduced them to obedience in 1588, and they have ever since been tributary to the Porte. They may be considered as divided into two classes; the people (the peasantry), and the Sheikhs, or persons distinguished by their wealth or family. The whole nation are husbandmen: each improving, with his own hands, the little domain of which he is the proprietor or occupier. All live frugally; without many enjoyments, but without many privations, since they are acquainted with but few objects of luxury. Generally speaking, they are poor, but there is no want of the absolute necessaries of life. The whole population of the Kesrouan is supposed to exceed 100,000 souls, occupying a surface of about 150 square leagues.

Note 14, page 92.

"After surveying the extraordinary magnificence of the temple of Balbec," remarks M. Volney, "one is with reason astonished that the Greek and Latin writers have scarcely spoken of it. Mr. Wood, who has consulted them upon this subject, has found no

mention of it, except in a fragment of John of Antioch, which attributes the construction of the edifice to the Emperor Antoninus Pius. The inscriptions which still remain accord with this opinion, which would sufficiently account for the Corinthian order being employed, since that style of architecture was not much used till the third century of Rome. But the eagle sculptured on the soffit is incorrectly adduced in confirmation of this opinion. If its crooked beak, its talons, and the caduceus which it holds, would lead us to conclude that it was meant for an eagle, the tuft on its head, resembling that of some pigeons, proves that it is not the Roman eagle. Besides, the same bird is found in the temple of Palmyra, and must therefore be an Oriental eagle consecrated to the Sun, who was the divinity of both temples. The worship of the sun existed at Balbec from the remote period of antiquity. A statue, like that of Osiris, had been transported there from the Egyptian Heliopolis, and the ceremonies of the worship are described by Macrobius."

Note 15, page 106.

The Metaweli are supposed to be ancient Syrians, although, as a distinct sect, their name does not occur before the eighteenth century. They are distinguished from the other Mahommedans of Syria, as being of the Shi-ite sect, the dominant one in Persia,—hence the derivation of the word;—"*followers of Ali.*" Their existence therefore in this country, under the dominion of the Sunnites, or orthodox Mahommedans, is any thing but agreeable to them; at the same time, that they are hated and avoided by the Christians. Indeed, few of

either party like to dwell amongst them. Their principal possessions are in the Anti-Libanus, Balbec being their chief station. They are considerably reduced in numbers of late years, and it is not improbable that they will soon be totally annihilated, and even their very name become extinct.

Note 16, page 108.

"These remains stand in a wady, surrounded by barren rocks, having a spring near them to the eastward. The temple faced the west. A grand flight of steps twelve paces broad, with a column three feet and a half in diameter at the end of the lower step, formed the approach to a spacious pronaos in which are remains of columns; here a door, six paces in width, opens into the cella, the fallen roof of which now covers the floor; and the side-walls to half their original height only remain. This chamber is thirty-five paces in length by fifteen in breadth. On each of the side-walls stood six pilasters of a bad Ionic order. At the extremity of the chamber are steps leading to a platform, where the statue of the deity may, perhaps, have stood: the whole space is here filled up with fragments of columns and walls. The square stones used in the construction of the walls are in general about four or five cubic feet each, but I saw some twelve feet long, four feet high, and four feet in breadth. On the right side of the entrance-door is a staircase in the wall, leading to the top of the building, and much resembling in its mode of construction the staircase in the principal temple of Balbec. The remains of the capitals of columns betray a very corrupt

taste, being badly sculptured, and without any elegance either in design or execution; and the temple seems to have been built in the latest times of paganism, and was perhaps subsequently repaired and converted into a church. The stone with which it has been built, is more decayed than that in the ruins at Balbec, being here more exposed to the inclemency of the weather. No inscriptions were any where visible. Around the temple are some ruins of ancient, and others of more modern habitations."—(Burckhardt, see page 30.)

Note 17, page 116.

"Paradise, παραδεισος according to the Oriental meaning of the word, signifies "an orchard," or "plantation of fruit-trees." The Septuagint makes use of the word, when they speak of the Garden of Eden, which the Lord planted at the beginning of the world, and placed Adam and Eve therein; and this famous garden is commonly known by the name of the Terrestrial Paradise. There have been many anxious inquiries (both natural and laudable), about its situation. Some have thought that it had never any existence, and that whatever is related concerning it in the Bible must be understood allegorically. Others believe that it was out of the confines of this world; others have pretended that it was only in the beginning, or before the creation of other material beings. It has been placed in the third heaven, in the orb of the moon, in the moon itself, in the middle of the region of the air, above the air, above the earth, under the earth, in a distant place concealed from the knowledge of men, in the place which is now occupied by the Caspian Sea,

under the Arctic Pole, and in places to the utmost southern regions. There is hardly any part of the world in which it has not been sought for:—In Asia, in Africa, in Europe, in America; in Tartary, upon the banks of the Ganges, in the Indies, in China, in the island of Ceylon, in Armenia, under the equator; in Mesopotamia, in Syria, in Persia, in Babylon, in Arabia, in Palestine, in Ethiopia, where the Mountains of the Moon are; near the mountains of the Libanus, Anti-Libanus, and Damascus."—(Martindale.)

Eden, a Hebrew word, signifying "pleasure" or "delight," was made the name of several places, which were either remarkably fruitful in their soil, or pleasant in their situation. Now, of all the places which go under this name, the learned have looked upon the following three as the countries most likely to have been the seat of the terrestrial paradise. The first is that province which the prophet Amos seems to notice, ch. i. 5, when he divides Syria into three parts, viz.:—Damascus, the Plain of Aven, and the House of Eden, called Cœlo-Syria, or the Hollow Syria, because the mountains of Libanus and Anti-Libanus enclose it on both sides, and make it to resemble a valley. The second place wherein several learned men have sought for the country of Eden is Armenia, between the sources of the Tigris, the Euphrates, the Araxes, and the Phasis, which they suppose to be the four rivers specified by Moses, Gen. ii. 10, etc.—(See Paxton's Illustrations of the Scriptures.)—The third place, which some have fixed on as the country of Eden, is Chaldea, not far from the banks of the Euphrates,—a country remarkable for its extreme fertility.—The investigation is un-

doubtedly attended with many difficulties, but it is hoped that they are not insurmountable.

Note 18, page 119.

I have lately had the satisfaction of learning that, since the recent conquest of Syria by the Egyptians, under Ibrahim, matters are much changed in this rebellious capital. Not only is every protection afforded to Christians, but an English Consul has been accredited and received with distinction.

Note 19, page 122.

Their modern political divisions according to Burckhardt are as follow:

1.—El Ghoutta.—Under this name is comprehended the immediate neighbourhood of Damascus, limited on the north by Djebel Szalehie, on the west by the Djebel el Sheikh, on the south by Djebel Kessoue, and on the east by the plain El Merdj. It is under the immediate government of the Mustellim of Damascus.

2.—Belad Haouran.—To the south of Djebel Kessoue and Djebel Khiara, begins the country of Haouran. It is bordered on the east by the rocky district El Ledja, and by the Djebel Haouran, both of which are sometimes comprised within the Haouran, and in this case the Djebel el Drouz, or the mountain of the Druses, whose chief resides at Soueida, may be considered another subdivision of the Haouran. To the S.E. where Boszra and El Remtha are the farthest inhabited villages, the Haouran borders upon the desert. Its western limits are the chain of villages on the Hadj road, from Ghebarib as far south as Remtha. The Haouran

comprises therefore part of Trachonites and Ituræa, the whole of Auranitis, and the northern districts of Batanæa.

3.—Djedour.—The flat country south of Djebel Kessoue, east of Djebel el Sheikh, and west of the Hadj road as far as Kasem or Nowa, is called Djedour. The greater part of Ituræa appears to be comprised within the limits of Djedour. The governor of Djolan usually commands also in Djidour.

4.—Djolan—Which comprises the plain to the south of Djedour, and to the west of Haouran. Its southern frontier is the Nahr Aweired, by which it is separated from the district of Erbad, and the Sheriat el Mandhour, which separates it from the district El Kefarat. On the west it is limited by the territory of Feik, and on the north-west by the southern extremity of Djebel Heish. Part of Batanæa, Argob, Hippene, and perhaps Gaulanitis, is comprised within this district.

5.—El Kanneytra—Comprises the mountain El Heish, from the neighbourhood of Banias to its southern extremity.

6.—Belad Erbad, or Belad Beni Djohma, likewise called El Bottein, which name it derives from the family of Bottein, who are the principal men of the country. It is limited on the north by the Aweired, which separates it from the Djolan; on the east by the Hadj route, on the south by the territory of Beni Obeid, and on the west, by the rising ground and the many Wadys which compose the territory of El Kafarat. The greater part of Batanæa is comprised within its limits, and it is remarkable that the name of Bottein has some affinity with that of Batanæa.

7.—El Kafarat.—A narrow stripe of land running along the south borders of the Wady Sheriat el Mandhour, from the frontiers of Belad Erbad to Om-Keis.

8.—Esserou—This district lies parallel to El Kafarat, and extends from Belad Erbad to the Ghor.

9.—Belad Beni Obeid—Is on the eastern declivity of the mountains of Adjeloun. It is bordered on the north by Erbad, on the west by the mountain Adjeloun, on the east and south by the district Ezzoueit. The southern parts of Batanda are comprised within these limits.

10.—El Koura—Is separated from Adjeleun on the S.W. side by Wady Yabes, which empties itself into the Jordan in the neighbourhood of Beysan. To the west and north-west it borders on Wostye, to the east on Belad Beni-Obeid. It is a mountainous country which comprises the northern parts of the ancient Galaaditis.

11.—El Wostye.—To the south of Serou, and east of the Ghor Beysan.

12.—Djebel Adjeloun.—On the north-east and east it borders on Beni-Obeid; on the south and south-west on the district of Moerad; on the west on the Ghor; and on the north on the Koura. It is throughout a mountainous country, and for the greater part woody. Part of the ancient Galaaditis is comprised within its limits. Its principal place is Kalaat Rabbad, where the Sheikh resides.

13.—Moread—Is limited on the north by Djebel Adjeloun; on the east by Ezzoueit; on the south by Wady Zerka; on the west by the Ghor. It forms part

of Galaaditis, and is in every part mountainous. Its principal village, where the Sheik lives, is Souf.

14.—Ezzoueit—Lies to the east of Beni-Obeid and Moerad; being separated from the latter by the Wady Deir and Seil Djerash. It is situated to the north of Wady Zerka, and extends eastwards beyond the Hadj route to the southward of the ruined city of Om Eddjemal, between Remtha and el Fedhein. Part of it is mountainous, the remainder a flat country. There are at present no inhabited villages in the Zoueit.

Note 20, page 126.

The Hadj route from Damascus to Mekka, with an enumeration of the different stations or halting-places, and their respective distances from one another, is to be found in the appendix to Burckhardt's Travels in Syria. The journey is usually performed in about six weeks.

Note 21, page 151.

Burckhardt made an excursion from hence in a north-easterly direction, which he thus describes:—"At a quarter of an hour from the town, we passed the Wady-el-Heif, a torrent coming from the mountain to the south-east. In the winter it furnishes water to a great part of the Ledja, where it is collected in cisterns. In one hour and three quarters we came to the village Shakka. On its eastern side stands an insulated building, consisting of a tower with two wings, it contains throughout a double row of arches: and the tower has two stories, each of which form a single chamber, without any opening but the door. Adjoining the village are the ruins of a handsome edifice, consisting of seve-

ral apartments, in which are some inscriptions as well as some insulated towers. To the south-east of the village, is the spring Aabenni, with the ruined village Tefkha, about three quarters of an hour from Shakka. E. by N. from Shakka—one hour—lies Djeneine, the last inhabited village on this side towards the desert. Its inhabitants are the shepherds of the people of El Hait. Half an hour to the north of Djeneine, is Tel Maaz, a hill on which is a ruined village. This is the north-east limit of the mountain, which here turns off towards the south behind Djeneine. At three quarters of an hour from Shakka, N.N.W., is El Hait, inhabited entirely by Catholic Christians. East of El Hait, three quarters of an hour, lies the village Heit."

Note 22, page 160.

The principal ruins of Boszra, according to Burckhardt, are the following:

1. A square building, circular within, with arches and niches, probably a Greek church. The walls are standing, but the roof has fallen in.

2. To the west of this edifice is an oblong square building called by the natives Deir Bohéiry, a ruined monastery with a Latin inscription.

3. Between these two buildings stands the gate of a house where Bohéiry, a rich Greek priest, a well known personage in these parts, formerly resided; and who, according to the Mahommedans, is said to have predicted the prophetic vocation of Mahommed, whom he saw, when a boy, passing from Mekka to Damascus. According to the tradition of the Christians, he was a

confidential counsellor of Mahommed in the completion of the Koran.

4. To the west of the above-mentioned buildings, stands the great mosque of Boszra; which is certainly coeval with the first era of Mahommedanism, and is commonly ascribed to Omar el Khattab; part of its roof has fallen in. On two sides of the square building runs a double row of columns of fine variegated marble, and well proportioned. The interior walls are covered with Cufic inscriptions in bas-relief, and otherwise embellished by numerous Arabesque ornaments.

5. South of the great mosque are the principal ruins of Boszra, the remains of a temple situated on the side of a long street, which runs across the whole town, and terminates at the western gate. Of this temple nothing remains but the back wall with two pilasters and a column with capitals and architraves. Besides these, are four detached Corinthian columns, being six spans in diameter, and about forty-five in height. Burckhardt says, that these columns and those of Kanouat are the finest remains of antiquity in the Haouran. The immediate vicinity of this temple is covered with the ruins of private houses. It stands at the upper part of the town, which slopes gently towards the west.

6. Not far from it, in descending the principal street, is a triumphal gate, almost entire, consisting of a high central arch with two lower side-arches, between which are Corinthian pilasters, with projecting bases for statues.

7. In the N.W. part of the town, in the court-yard of a mosque, is a stone covered with a long and beautiful inscription in small Cufic characters.

8. In the eastern quarter is a large *birket* or reservoir, almost perfect, one hundred and ninety paces in length, one hundred and fifty three in breadth, and enclosed by a wall seven feet in thickness, built of large square stones: its depth may be about twenty feet; it is supposed to be the work of the Saracens, and made for watering the pilgrim caravans to Mekka, which, as late as the seventeenth century passed by Boszra.

9. Without the precincts of the town, and just beyond the walls, on the south side, is a fine large castle of Saracen origin, surrounded by a deep ditch. Its walls are very thick, and in the interior are alleys, dark vaults, subterraneous passages, etc., of the most solid construction. There is also a well. Burckhardt says it is altogether the best built castle in Syria, and an important post to protect the harvests of the Haouran against the hungry Bedouins.

10. Beyond the town walls, and at some distance to the north of the rivulet Djeheir, stands the famous mosque El Mebrak, and near it is the cemetery. Ibn Affan, who first collected the scattered leaves of the Koran into a book, relates that when Othman, in coming from the Hedjaz, approached the neighbourhood of Boszra with his army, he ordered the people to build a mosque on the spot where the camel which bore the Koran should lie down. Such was the origin of the mosque El Mebrak, a word which means the spot where a camel couches down, or a halting-place. The dome or kubbe, which covers the summit of this mosque was destroyed by the Wahabi. Of the vineyards for which Boszra was celebrated, even in the days of Moses,

and which are commemorated by the Greek medals of ΚΟΛΩΝΙΑ ΒΟΣΤΡΗC, not a vestige remains.

Note 23, page 160.

Burckhardt, in the tour he made in this direction, enumerates the following places :—" In an hour and a quarter, Errahha a miserable village; twenty minutes further, Wady el Thaleth, so called from the wadys which, higher up in the mountain, unite into one. In a quarter of an hour more, Kherbet Rishé, a ruined village, and in one hour Ezzehhoue near a rivulet (Ain Ettouahein, i. e. the source of the mills) a Druse village with a single Christian family. Two hours from Ezzehhoue is Aaere, a village standing upon a Tel in the plain. Aaere is the seat of the second chief of the Druses in the Haouran. Here he engaged guides, two Druses and a Christian, to accompany him in his visit to the parts of the Djebel Haouran bordering upon the desert. Proceeding from hence in an E. N. E. direction, in an hour and a quarter he came to two hills, with the ruins of a village called Medjmar. At a quarter of an hour is the Druse village Afine, where is a spring. At one hour from Afine E. by S., upon the summit of the lower mountain, stands Hebran, only partially inhabited. Proceeding from Hebran towards the Kelb (Dog), or, as the Arabs here call it, Kelab Haouran, he reached Kuffer, once a considerable town, being three quarters of an hour in circumference: most of the houses, which are all of stone, are still entire. The Kelab is a cone rising from the lower ridge of the mountain : it is barren on the S. and E. sides, but covered on N. and W. with the trees common to these mountains.

Burckhardt says that in very clear weather, the sea may be seen from the summit, though it does not appear to be of great elevation; but perhaps like the pyramids of Egypt, this arises from the want of some object of comparison near it. On the east side, the Bedouins encamp in the spring, for the sake of the excellent pasturing-places which it affords them, but the mountain is otherwise barren. Descending into the plain by the banks of the Wady Awairid, a winter torrent, in three hours he reached Zaele; a ruined city, near which there is a copious spring, much frequented by the Arabs in summer-time for watering. The Great Desert extends N. E. E., and S. E. of Zaele, to the distance of three days' journey to the eastward. There is still a good arable soil, intersected by numerous Tels, and covered with the ruins of cities and villages in every direction. They are all built of the same black rock of which the Djebel consists. The name of the desert changes in every district, and the whole is sometimes called Telloul, from its Tels or hillocks. Springs are nowhere met with, but water is easily found in digging to the depth of three or four feet. At the point where this desert terminates, begins the desert called El Hammad, which extends on one side to the bank of the Euphrates, and on the other to the north of the Wady Serethan, as far as the Djof. From Zaele he recrossed the mountain, passing over its S.W. corner and in two hours came to a spring called Ras el Beder, i. e., the Moon's Head, whose waters flow down into the plain as far as Boszra. From the spring he redescended, and reached Zahouet el Khudher, a ruined city, standing in a wady at a short distance from the plain,

having a castle and near it a church, formerly visited by the Christians of the Haouran, for the purpose of offering up their prayers to the *Khudher*, or St. George, called by the Arabs *Abd Maaz*. From the Khudher to Ayoun, passing through a plain called here Ard Aaszaf, in distance two hours, the ground is covered with walls, which probably once enclosed orchards, and well-cultivated fields. At present the town, which has above five hundred houses, does not reckon one inhabitant. The same ruined walls are met with as far as Oerman, distant one hour and a half from Ayoun. Oerman, which is an ancient city, somewhat larger than Ayoun, appears from an inscription which Burckhardt copied there, to be the site of Philippopolis, a town founded by Philip, emperor of Rome, who was a native of Boszra. One hour and a quarter from Oerman, is the town and castle called Szalkhat situated upon a hill at the southern foot of Szfeikh. The town, which contains eight hundred houses, but totally uninhabited, presents nothing worthy of observation but a mosque, probably a repaired temple or church of the time of the Crusades. Within the mosque is a large stone with a fleur-de-lis cut upon it. The castle stands on the summit of the hill, and forms a complete circle, the upper part of which is paved with large flat stones; round its base runs a deep ditch, across which is a high arched bridge, leading into the castle. Over the gate is a well-sculptured eagle with expanded wings. The castle, from its commanding position, is represented to be of the first importance, as a defence of the Haouran against the Arabs. From Szalkhat it is three hours to Kereye, a city containing five hundred houses, four of which only

were inhabited. Kereye is three hours' distance from Boszra. At three quarters of an hour Burckhardt reached Houshhoush, a heap of ruins upon a hillock in the plain, famed over all the Haouran for the immense treasures said to be buried there. Half an hour from Houshhoush he came to Deir Aboud, a building sixty feet square, the walls of which only are standing. At an hour and a half from it, is the considerable ruined village Kaires, on the Wady Zedy, the largest of all the wadys which descend from the mountain into the plain. Turning from thence in a north-west direction, in three quarters of an hour he came to the ruined village of Shmerrin, and in two hours and a quarter more returned to Aaere.

Note 24, page 187.

Whilst detained at the encampment of our escort we made attempts to induce some of them to accompany us further south, and, if possible, to reach Wady Mousa the site of Petra, the Edom of the Prophecies. Although we had been warned of their want of good faith, in our eagerness to attain the object of our wishes, we unfortunately accompanied these negotiations by offers of money. Unfortunately, I say, for having once awakened the cupidity of our chief, he did not scruple, as will be seen by the sequel, to take a more expeditious mode of securing the proffered boon without caring for our disappointment. The places we had noted down as worthy of particular notice, were the following. Arraya the ancient Aroer, the ruins of which stand on the edge of a precipice, overlooking the Wady Modjeb, the Arnon of the Scriptures. All the country to the southward of the

Wale, as far as the Wady Modjeb, is comprised under the appellation of El Koura, a term often applied in Syria to plains. El Koura, according to Burckhardt is the plain of Moab. The soil is very sandy and not fertile. The Haouran black stone, or basalt, if it may so be called, is again met with here. The Arnon is one short day's journey to the south of Om-el-Reszaz, and divides the province of Belka from that of Kerek, as it formerly divided the small kingdoms of the Moabites and the Amorites. Three to four hours to the southward of Wady Modjeb is Rabbah, probably the ancient Rabbath Moab. The ruins of Rabbah are about an hour in circuit and are situated upon a low hill, commanding the whole plain. Burckhardt says, they contain nothing remarkable. At six hours S. by E. is Kerek built on the top of a steep hill, surrounded on all sides by a deep and narrow valley, the mountains beyond which command the town. The latter is surrounded by a wall fallen down in several places, and defended by six or seven large towers. There are no antiquities, excepting a few fragments of granite columns Twenty years ago Kerek was inhabited by about four hundred Turkish and fifty Christian families. The latter are free from all exactions and enjoy the same rights with the Turks. They are represented as being very hospitable. When a stranger enters the town the people almost come to blows with one another in their eagerness to have him for a guest. Kerek is probably the Charax Omanorum of Pliny. It is the see of a Greek Bishop. The diocese is called Battra in Arabic, and Πετρας in Greek, probably the name by which the

city was known under the Macedonian Greeks, an appellation often applied by the latter to barbarian hill-posts; hence the erroneous opinion that Kerek is the site of the ancient capital of Arabia Petræa. When the effects of commerce, observes the learned editor of Burckhardt, required a situation better suited than Kerek to the collected population and increased opulence of the Nabatæi, the appellation (Petra) was transferred to the Wady Mousa, which place had before been known to the Greeks by the name Arce (Ἀρκὴ) a corruption, probably, of the Hebrew Rekem. When the stream of commerce, which had enriched the Nabatæi had partly reverted to its old Egyptian channel, and had partly taken the new course, which made a Palmyra in the midst of a country still more destitute of the commonest gifts of nature, Wady Mousa became gradually depopulated and its inhabitants returned to their natural state of divided wanderers or small agricultural communities. Its river, however, and the intricate recesses of its rocky valleys, still attract and give security to a tribe of Arabs, who nevertheless, as if influenced by the prejudices of their forefathers, interdict all approach to the stranger. Indeed, until recently, the prohibition announced by Edom to Israel, "Thou shalt not go through," seemed destined never to be removed. Amongst the few modern travellers, who have had the good fortune to visit this site, the names of Burckhardt, Irby and Mangles, and Leon de Laborde are the only ones known to us by their publications. The work of the latter pronounced by his translator to be "one of the most interesting and valu-

able accession to archaiological literature that have recently issued from the continental press," is now before the public.

Note 25, page 220.

" The arrangement of Oriental houses satisfactorily explains the circumstances of the letting down of the paralytic into the presence of Jesus Christ, in order that he might heal him.—(Mark ii. 4; Luke v, 19.) The paralytic was carried by some of his neighbours to the top of the house, either by forcing their way through the crowd by the gateway and passages up the stairs, or else by conveying him over some of the neighbouring terraces; and there, after they had drawn away the στεγην or ' awning,' they let him down along the side of the roof, through the opening or impluvium, into the *midst* of the court *before Jesus*." — (See Horne's " Critical Study of the Scriptures," vol. i. page 385.) For a further criticism on the Greek word cited above, consult Dr. Shaw's Travels, vol. i. pp. 374—376, and Hartley's Researches in Greece, page 240.

Note 26, page 225.

A description of this remarkable temple of Mussulman worship, may be found in Mr. J. S. Buckingham's " Travels in Palestine." By some writers, it is thought to have been built by the Emperor Heracleius, and dedicated to Zachariah; but the Turks believe it was built by Caliph Weled, in the 86th year of the Hegira, A. D. 706. The mention of Mr. Buckingham's name reminds me of an amusing instance of Oriental *naiveté*, which occurred during my sojourn at

Szalt. One of the inhabitants of that place hearing of the arrival of Franks in the town, presented himself to us with an offer of his service, to conduct us to the most remarkable places in the neighbourhood, at the same time producing a certificate of good conduct and intelligence, signed by the above-mentioned gentleman. I was about to conclude a bargain with the man, when I discovered that the certificate had been made out in favour of his father! It was with much difficulty that he could be persuaded that it was not one and the same thing.

Note 27, page 239.

The ages that preceded Islamism, are designated by Arabian historians, under the name of *djahiliyyah*, or "times of darkness or ignorance."—See a recent very interesting publication, entitled "Lettres sur l'Histoire des Arabes avant l'Islamisme," par Fulgence Fresnel.

Note 28, page 242.

Concerning the origin of Palmyra, rendered celebrated by the actions of Zenobia, whose capital it was, and by the reported magnificence of its existing remains, little certain is known. We read in Kings i. 9. and Chron. ii. 8. that Solomon built "Tadmor in the Wilderness;" and Josephus assures us that the city, which was subsequently known under the name of Palmyra, by the Greeks and Romans, was one and the same place. It has again recovered its original appellation, being known to the wandering Arabs under that of Tadmor, or Tedmour. Notwithstanding this remote origin, it were idle to attribute an earlier date to the existing ruins of Palmyra, than that of the establish-

ment of the Greeks in Syria. The first mention of it in Roman history, is under Mark Anthony (see Appian, De Bello Civil. lib. 5), at which time it appears the inhabitants were noted for their riches, and their commerce with the eastern nations. The description which Pliny gives of its situation,—he omits to speak of its public monuments,—as compared with its present appearance, is singularly correct. He says, "Palmyra is remarkable on account of its situation, the richness of its soil, and its agreeable streams. It is encompassed on every side by a vast desert of sand, which completely separates it from the rest of the world, and it has always maintained its independence between the two great empires of Rome and Parthia, whose constant endeavour it is, during their wars, to bring it over to their respective interests. It is distant 337 miles from Seleucia on the Tigris, 203 to the nearest part of the coast, and 176 from Damascus." Its situation at the eastern foot of a chain of low hills looking towards the desert, the fertility of the surrounding country, and the purity of its waters, are facts acknowledged by all who have visited the site. Wood, who accompanied Dawkins to Palmyra, in 1757, visited it from Hassiah. His work is a large folio, and is to be found in all the great libraries of Europe. He describes the first view of the ruins as singularly romantic, and remarkable on account of their great extent, but, on closer inspection, not answering to their first impressions. This opinion is confirmed by Burckhardt, who travelled in 1810. "Having seen," he says, "the ruins of Tadmor, a comparison between these two renowned remains of antiquity naturally offered itself to my mind.

The entire view of the ruins of Palmyra, when seen at a certain distance, is infinitely more striking than those of Balbec; but there is not any one spot so imposing as the interior view of the temple of Balbec. The temple of the sun at Tadmor is upon a grander scale than that of Balbec, but it is choked with Arab houses, which admit only a view of the building in detail. The architecture of Balbec is richer than that of Tadmor." My friend, M. de Breuvery, who visited Palmyra during my excursion in the Haouran, confessed himself rather disappointed, and by no means repaid for the trouble, privations, and dangers he encountered to effect his purpose.

Note 29, page 246.

"In spring, when the Arabs approach the confines of Syria, about twenty pedlers leave Damascus on a visit to the different tribes. They take with them for sale whatever goods of town production the Arabs want; articles of dress, powder and ball; nails, iron, horse-shoes, sabres, coffee, tobacco, sweetmeats, spices, harness for the Sheikh's horses, etc. Of these petty merchants, each pays a small yearly tribute to the Sheikh of the tribe which he frequents; thus he is protected by them, and enjoys all the privileges of a free Arab. The whole capital employed in this trade, does not exceed the amount of five or six thousand pounds sterling. Every merchant has his own tent, and his own camels; and when several of them visit the same tribe, they pitch their tents close to each other, and establish in this manner a kind of market-place. They follow the camps wherever they go, and

are exposed to almost as many casualties as the Arabs themselves; but as their property consists chiefly n, goods, should the camels be driven off at night by the enemy, they still retain whatever is in their tents. These merchants allow one year's credit for all they sell; and in the following year they take in return for their merchandize, butter and sheep, of which they dispose on their arrival at Damascus, in winter."—(Burckhardt, vol. i. p. 191, 192.)

Note 30, page 252.

But this is the ridiculous side of the question and only affects the social interests of a few individuals. The more serious feature is the detriment, commercial and political, that arises from a feeble representation, or what is nearly as bad, a representation by aliens. It will appear almost incredible, but it is not the less true, that we have but one regular consular establishment throughout the whole of Syria. Excepting at Beirout, all the other posts, in the interior and along an extended line of coast, are held by aliens, and many of them representing contemporaneously the interests of different powers and often diametrically opposed to one another. It is true that there are few or no English residents besides the consul himself; but if the resources and wants of this beautiful province of the Turkish Empire were known to the enterprising merchants of Liverpool and Glasgow, and due protection was afforded to infant commercial establishments, it is more than probable that the number of settlers would increase both for purposes of trade, and the cheapness and delight of living under one of the finest

climates in the world. By a fundamental law of the empire, Christians are incapacitated from holding lands, which in spite of these advantages would be a check to emigration, but there are other pursuits of industry that might be introduced into this country, with every prospect of success and protection, provided the prejudices of the majority were respected. It will be seen from this and the preceding volume that the article of silk is every where a staple commodity. But it is of an inferior quality, no attempts, probably, having ever been made for the improvement of its manufacture. The same may be said of wine and oil. The grapes are nowhere to be equalled, and yet the wine made from them is hardly drinkable. The olives are superior even to those of Greece, nevertheless the oil is not what might be expected from such fruit.

Note 31, page 257.

From a genealogical table in the Encyclopædia Britannica, it appears that the common Turkish dog is the parent stock of most others known in Europe.

Note, 32, page 268.

There are three breeds of horses in Syria, the true Arab breed, the Turkman, and the Kurdy, which is a mixture of the two former. The Bedouins count five noble breeds of horses, descended as they say from the five favourite mares of their prophet—Tanese, Manekeye, Kokeyl, Sablaye, and Djulfle. These five principal races diverge into ancient ramifications. Every mare particularly swift and handsome, belonging to any one of the chief races, may give origin to a new

breed, the descendants of which are called after her, so that the names of different Arab breeds in the desert are innumerable.

Note 33, page 292.

" Daphne was the same with respect to Antioch, as Baiæ was to Rome, and Canopus to Alexandria—a place of resort for amusement and pleasure. The senses were gratified with harmonious sounds and aromatic odours ; beautiful were the walks, and shades, and grottos, beautiful the Syrian women who resorted or dwelt here: at last, all who had any fortitude or virtue avoided the place. The soldier and the philosopher shunned its temptations. Nevertheless, the groves of Daphne continued for many ages to attract the veneration, and to be the resort of natives and strangers ; the privileges of the sacred ground were enlarged by the munificence of succeeding Emperors ; and every generation added new ornaments to the splendour of the temple. At last the Christians of Antioch built a magnificent church here, to Babylas, bishop of that city, who died in the persecution of Decius ; the rites thenceforth began to be neglected, and the priest of Apollo to forsake the place. Julian the Apostate endeavoured to revive the love of paganism amidst the groves of Daphne. He visited the neglected altars, and resumed the sacrifices, and saw with mortification and anguish that their reign was over, their sun was going down, and that the mysterious voice had gone forth in Daphne, as in the temples f Greece, " Let us go hence." One night the temple was discovered to be in flames; the

statue of Apollo was consumed to ashes, as also were the altars; Julian said that the malice of the Christians had caused the conflagration; the Christians said, it was the vengeance of God."—(Carne.)

END OF VOL. II.

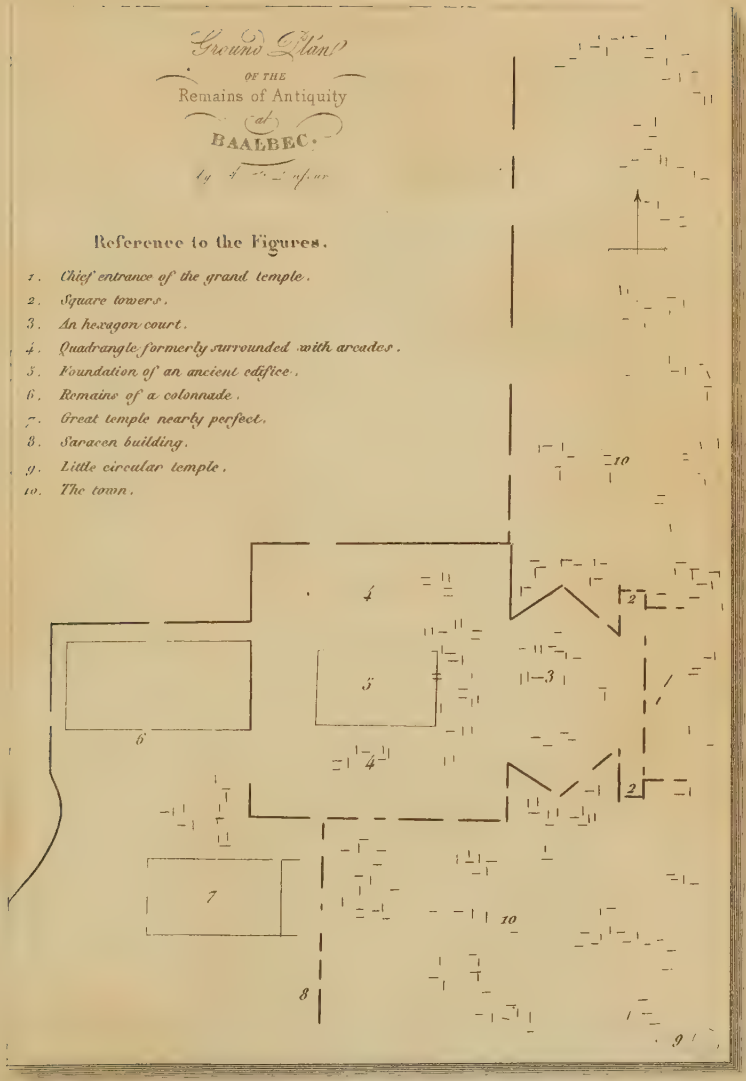
WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

Ground Plan
OF THE
Remains of Antiquity
at
BAALBEC.

by [illegible]

Reference to the Figures.

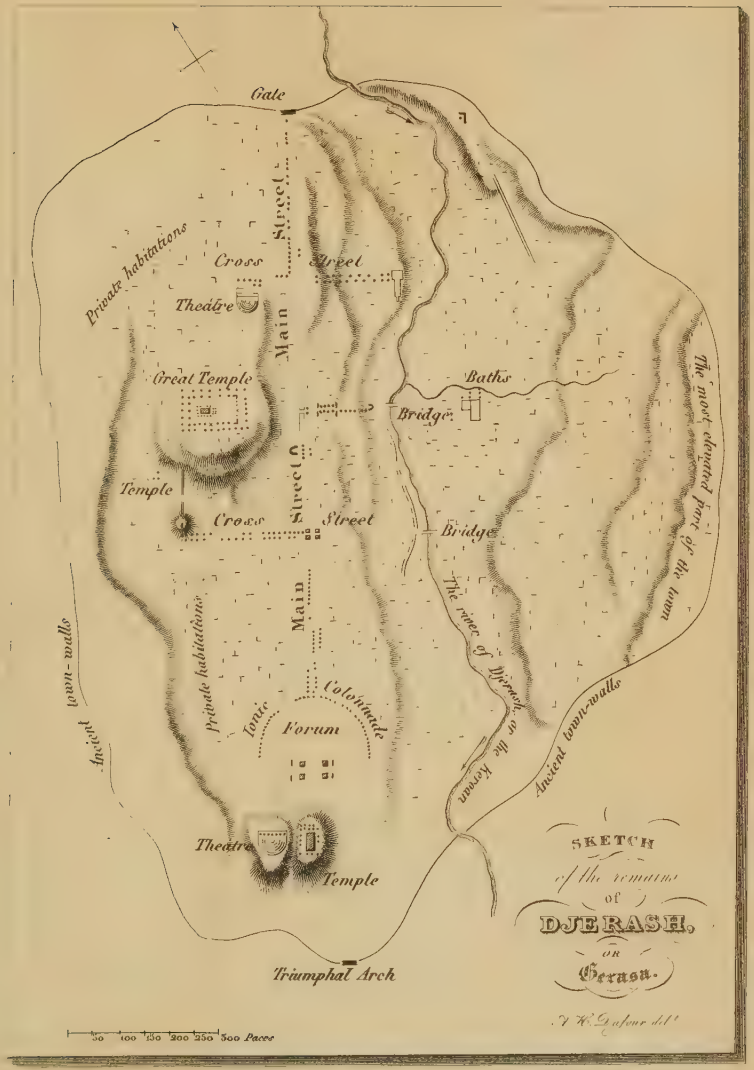
1. *Chief entrance of the grand temple.*
2. *Square towers.*
3. *An hexagon court.*
4. *Quadrangle formerly surrounded with arcades.*
5. *Foundation of an ancient edifice.*
6. *Remains of a colonnade.*
7. *Great temple nearly perfect.*
8. *Saracen building.*
9. *Little circular temple.*
10. *The town.*



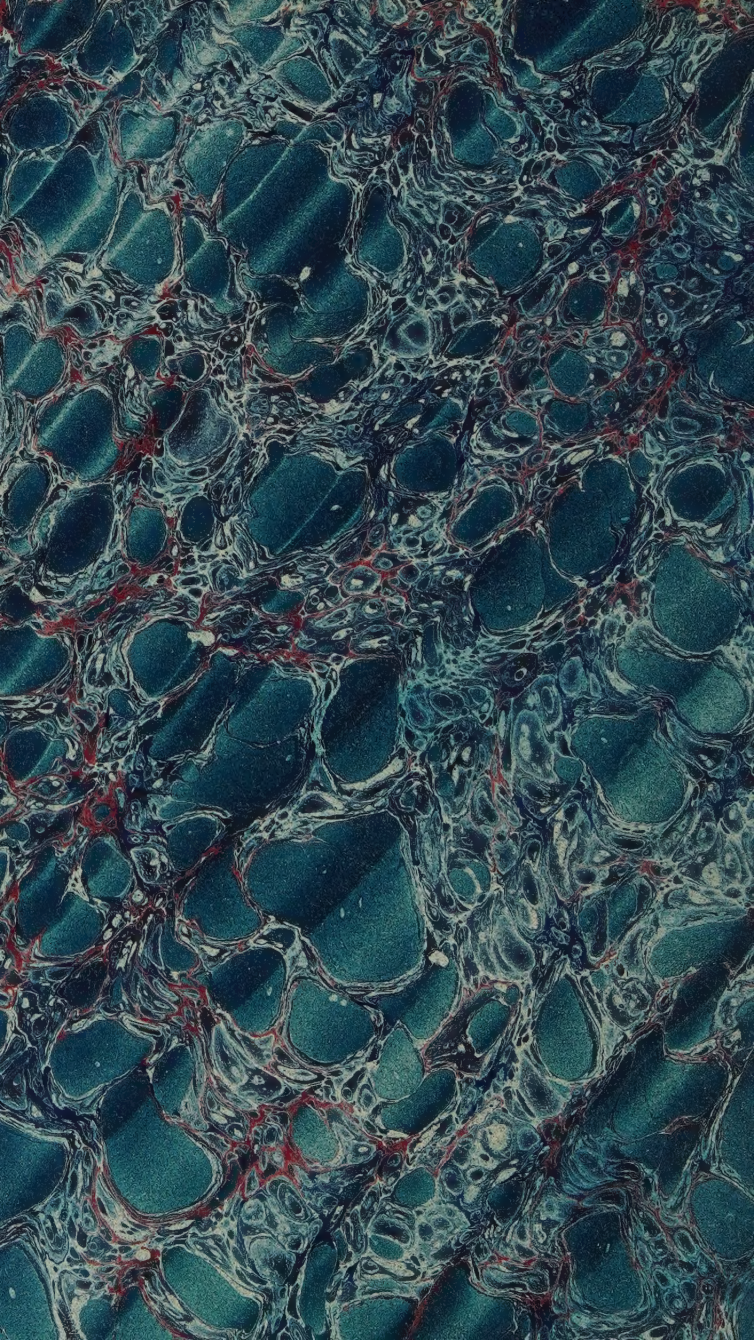
by Henry Colburn, 13, Great [illegible]

Sketch
of the Site
of
AMMAN,
and its
EXISTING REMAINS.

Published by Henry ...



Published by Henry Colburn, 13, Great Marlborough Street 1837



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